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Privatisation plan axed after 36 hours

Labour does rapid U-turn on Tote sale

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING CORRESPONDENT

LABOUR performed a remarkable U-turn last night when Robin Cook insisted that his party would not privatise the Tote. Only 36 hours earlier, a spokesman for Gordon Brown had floated the idea of selling the pool betting organisation for up to £500 million.

The privatisation plan, supposedly discussed by Labour frontbenchers, had the party's senior figures in turmoil yesterday. Claims and counter-claims were matched by confirmations and denials involving Tony Blair and his three most senior Shadow Cabinet members: Mr Brown, Jack Straw and Mr Cook.

In the end it was left to the Shadow Foreign Secretary - one of the keenest followers of racing in the Commons - to sort out the muddle. Choosing suitable racing parlance, Mr Cook said: "In the run up to a general election there is a rather festive atmosphere and things get out and running before the rest of us have saddled up. This is a story that should never have started and we want to stop it."

The "story" began at the weekend with reports that the Tote would be Labour's first privatisation. Charlie Whelan, spokesman for Gordon Brown, confirmed that the Shadow Chancellor would like to use the estimated proceeds of between £400 and £500 million to help to fund the party's spending plans and insisted that Mr Straw and Mr Brown had discussed the plan. "They think that given the current state of public spending there is potential to



Cook: "Story should never have started"

years has not done it, I don't think there is much scope for a Labour government, do you? We want to put a damper on this and the idea of privatisation will not be in the Labour manifesto."

Mr Cook then stepped in. "A hare appears to have got out and run before any Shadow Cabinet member knew anything about it," he said. "I can authoritatively bring down the curtain on this story. There have been no discussions in the Shadow Cabinet about the sale of the Tote. There will be no proposal for the Tote to sell the Tote. The Tote's future lies in racing and not outside racing as a private company."

"I am only too aware of the important potential that Tote has for racing and I want to see racing have the chance to realise that potential."

Racing which received £8.3 million from the Tote last year, regarded the middle with bemusement. Tristram Ricketts, chief executive of the British Horseracing Board, said: "It is not as though the Tote is another nationalised industry like British Rail. The Tote has been consistently advised that the Tote, not the Government, owns the Tote, so to suggest it may be the first privatisation for a Labour government was, to say the least, rather surprising."

If the Tote were privatised it would, under European rules, almost certainly lose its monopoly and, with it, its value.

Woodrow Wyatt, page 18
Racing, page 43



Deborah Fowler with Edita, the orphaned Bosnian girl who was "irresponsibly" adopted but who will not be returned to her grandparents

Bosnia orphan may stay in Britain

By RICHARD DUCE

A GIRL aged four orphaned in Bosnia's civil war may stay with her British foster parents even though they were guilty of "appalling irresponsibility" in adopting her, a High Court judge ruled yesterday.

Edita Keranovic should not have her life "shattered again" by the upheaval of being returned to grandparents she did not remember, said Sir Stephen Brown, President of the Family Division. But he made plain to Alan and Deborah Fowler that Edita would remain a Keranovic and said the couple faced a "superhuman" struggle in convincing the child's family that her best interests remained in Britain.

Edita's grandfather, Hasan Keranovic, 58, said he was left distraught. "When our family was massacred in Bosnia we could somehow come to terms with that. Edita is all that remains and we cannot be together. She is our child and she belongs to us."

In his 48-page ruling on the future for Edita, the judge described how the girl was nine weeks when Serbian troops arrived at her home village of Hrustovo in May 1992. The Muslim women and children were sent to shelter at nearby Kuzavac. "Soldiers attacked them there, and threw grenades into the garage and machine-gunned it. They perpetrated a massacre, killing more than 30 women and children. Edita's mother and her little brother, Edin, were killed, as were her maternal grandmother, two aunts and two cousins," the judge said.

Edita was pulled alive from beneath her mother's body and her plight was recorded by journalists, bringing her to the attention of Mr and Mrs Fowler. They began moves which included help from



Yugoslavian-born Lady Nott, who runs a British-based charity to assist Bosnian War casualties and is married to Sir John Nott, a former defence secretary.

Edita arrived in Britain when seven months for medical treatment. Mr Fowler, 62, a chartered accountant, and his wife, 49, adopted her at Oxford County Court but the order was set aside after investigations showed members of the child's family were refugees in Switzerland.

In the original adoption proceedings the county court was given a "wholly inaccurate and misleading" account of the circumstances in which Edita was found, Sir Stephen said, adding that the Fowlers knew

Murdered girl told of stalker

Billie-Jo Jenkins, 13, who was bludgeoned to death in the garden of her home in Hastings, had feared that she was being stalked.

She had told schoolfriends that a man was following her in the streets around her house and that an anonymous caller had telephoned the family home and hung up before speaking. A local newspaper reported the story, which was later corrected, saying that their inquiries were continuing.

Yeltsin denial

Boris Yeltsin's wife, Naina, has added her voice to those calling for the President to resign. *Komsomolskaya Pravda* said. But Mrs Yeltsin dismissed the story, probably leaked by the Kremlin, as "baseless".

Unionists win promises all round in censure debate

By PHILIP WEBSTER AND ARTHUR LEATHLEY

THE Ulster Unionists bargained across the floor of the Commons last night as Douglas Hogg fought to head off an attempt to dismiss him and force a vote of confidence in the Government.

The nine-strong group defended and appeared to receive "both" parties promised special treatment for the best figures of Northern Ireland in negotiations to get the European ban on British beef lifted.

Mr Hogg promised that he would accept the lifting of the ban on certain herds in Northern Ireland as expected, they qualified for such treatment ahead of herds in other parts of the United Kingdom. Proposals are likely to go to Brussels within a fortnight, he disclosed.

Mr Trimble had earlier managed to exact a similar assurance from Labour and during the debate he interrupted Gavin Strang, the Shadow Agriculture Minister, to ask whether he would back the progressive lifting of the ban, beginning with Northern Ireland. Mr Strang replied "Yes" and told him that the strength of the Northern Ireland scheme was its special identification scheme.

However, the promise seemed unlikely to persuade

Bronze lays to rest Dickens of dilemma

By ALAN HAMILTON

DESPITE a clearly stated intention in his will that he did not want one, Charles Dickens is to be honoured with a statue - the first in Britain to be raised to our most popular of novelists, who died in 1870.

Enthusiasts in the writers' birthplace of Portsmouth have won the city council's approval to raise a bronze effigy of Dickens and have earmarked a site in Commercial Road outside Boots the Chemists. The scheme has the approval of the author's descendants and of the society which keeps his memory alive.

In his will, Dickens ordered his friends "on no account to make me the subject of any monument, memorial or testimonial whatever". The spirit of his wishes has long been broken; he wanted to be buried in Rochester, but lies in Westminster Abbey, and his whiskered profile stares at anyone who looks at the reverse of a £10 note.

Edward Preston, secretary of the Dickens Fellowship, said last night: "That will be written tongue in cheek, using Sarah Gamp's pen from *Martin Chuzzlewit*. It is in the same vein as Mrs Gamp saying: 'Whatever you do, leave more than a shilling's worth of gin'. Dickens loved publicity. I am sure he really wanted a statue."

David Dickens, the author's son, said he was pleased to see the statue.

£15 A-level surcharge for Latin and Greek students

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

AN examination board provoked outrage among classics teachers yesterday after imposing an extra £15 charge on every Latin and Greek A-level student.

Edexcel, formerly the University of London board, said the extra fee for people sitting examinations this summer was required to cover the cost of setting papers that were taken by so few. The number of entrants for Latin and Greek has plummeted over the past three decades.

The decision to charge 50 per cent more for Latin and Greek than for other academic subjects was condemned for threatening the already uncertain future of both subjects. Teachers accused the board, one of three to offer A-level Latin and Greek, of breaking the spirit of its charitable status.

Philip Parr, head of classics at The Haberdashers' Aske's School in Epsom, Hertfordshire, which will enter a dozen students for Latin and several for Greek this summer, said: "We can pay £15 extra per candidate, but you will find this puts pressure on schools with small Latin or Greek sets either not to take that subject to A-level or, if they do, to pass the cost on to the student."

"It will be another nail in the coffin of minority subjects and yet this is an education system in which we are led to believe you have choice. You can guarantee we will fight this. Classics teachers are like hydra: you cut off some of our parts but we grow two somewhere else."

Students taking A-level Latin and Greek have halved from 3,117 and 583 respectively in 1975 to 1,625 and 283 last year, when 355 took Latin and 54 Greek with Edexcel. Schools will now have to find £43.50 a candidate instead of the £28.50 they were expecting to pay.

The board said: "Supplementary charges are introduced where there are very small numbers of people taking the syllabus. It is a huge cost to the board if a school enters just one or two candidates." Edexcel's two rival boards said yesterday they had no plans to increase charges.

The Times on the Internet
<http://www.the-times.co.uk>



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Herd instinct leaves no one out to pasture

To try toppling a Government via a debate on brain-disease in cattle via a proposal to cut a minister's salary seems as mad as the maddest cow, but nobody has suggested incinerating MPs. Instead, kicking and lowering, they were herded yesterday into the Commons chamber at 3.30pm for the great debate.

The occasion was as unwhipped as the logic behind it. Gavin Strang, Labour's district spokesman on Agriculture, gave the impression of an innocent man confused by sophists. Barracked by Tories, he flailed wildly through his opening speech, stumbling over his first "encephalopathy" and became rattled by

Tory MPs (who think Ms Harman, Shadow Health spokesperson, made the BSE panic worse) shouting "Harriet! Harriet! Where's Harriet?" He jumped back and forth in his text, took a second run at things, cried "Oh yes!" in tones of increasing despair, and offered a passable imitation of a jumping needle on a scratched LP. When his views on beef were challenged, the hapless man protested "I don't want to make a meal of this", to howls of amusement.

Tony Blair had sent his dog, Seated beside Strang, scowling, John Prescott barked intermittently at the Tories, yelled "Shuddup" at hecklers, and tried to help.

"That was July," wailed



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

Strang. "That was July!" snorted the dog. "Siddown, baldy!" shouted a Labour heckler at a thinning Tory heckler. "Siddown!" barked Prescott.

Eventually Strang sat down. Douglas Hogg stood up. My colleague on *The Independent* thinks that as the motion was to reduce Hogg's salary, his speech should have emphasised his, his wife's and the hungry little Hoggies' need for the money. Times readers may prefer my opinion: that the correct behaviour would have been to leave the room

while his salary was debated. The Agriculture Minister took neither course. In a brazen speech, he lashed out at every critic, questioned the right of a Scot (Strang) to represent English farmers, sneered at Prescott for having once been a waiter, and blamed the BSE crisis on Ms Harman. Mr Hogg reminds us of those snarling little terriers which, offered a biscuit, sink their teeth into their benefactor's leg. This stupid debate, he claimed, meant "I

cannot attend today's important Agriculture Council when beef will be discussed."

"There'll probably be a breakthrough!" shouted one Labour backbencher. But at the intervention of one small group of MPs, Hogg's bile turned to treacle. Strang's rally to a coo. Yesterday was the Unionists' hour in the sun. Was that their leader, David Trimble, dropping a handkerchief? Strang rushed to pick it up. ("Yes, I will give way to the Hon. Gentleman") — *Hon. Members: "Aaaah!"* The Province, insisted Strang, should be "the first ship in the convoy". Was that Roy Beggs (Antrim E) who fluttered an eyelash?

Hogg all but embraced him, murmuring about the "special circumstances" of Northern Ireland. Hogg had lived in the Province, he grunted, "for many a generation". If the minister had possessed a mandolin he would have serenaded Mr Beggs's table. "I feel strongly about Northern Ireland," he breathed. But Hogg's ardour had limits. Ian Paisley (DUP, Antrim N) asked if he would put a case to the European Union for exempting Northern Ireland alone from the beef ban on Britain. Unless I am mistaken, John Major (beside him), his expression suggesting "what-ever", mouthed "Yes." Hogg said — in so many words — "No." A revealing moment.

Rail services cut as private firm lays off drivers

By JONATHAN PRYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

ANGRY commuters blamed a private rail company yesterday for setting new standards of incompetence when it was forced to cut hundreds of services because it had laid off too many drivers.

Services linking the commuter belt of Surrey, Berkshire, Hampshire and Dorset with Waterloo were left in chaos after South West Trains suspended 39 of its normal timetable services yesterday for at least a month to release more drivers for peak commuter trains.

The company, which is owned by the Stagecoach bus group, gave redundancy to 70 drivers last month to cut costs and then found it no longer had enough drivers to operate its 1,500 daily services. SWT said it was retraining its remaining drivers and hoped to return to a normal service within five weeks.

John Watts, the Transport Minister responsible for rail privatisation, described the SWT management as "inept" and said the company could have its £35 million annual subsidy cut for failing to meet its obligations.

At Waterloo disillusioned passengers blamed privatisation for the problems and said promised improvements to their services had not materialised.

Nicholas Higgins, 35, a management consultant from Bracknell, Berkshire, said: "There is only one thing that has changed and that is that car parking fees have gone up. It shows what happens when you let a bus company take over a train company. There

Emergency crews led 118 London Underground passengers to safety along the track after a northbound Tube train was derailed 150 yards outside Euston station yesterday morning. Police and ambulance crews were called but nobody was injured in the derailment or the evacuation. All north and southbound services on the affected section of the Northern line were suspended. Services on the Charing Cross branch of the line resumed later. The Northern line between Camden and Moorgate, the City section, was expected to reopen this morning. An investigation was being held into the cause of the accident.

has been too much emphasis on cost cutting and not a blind bit of notice on what it does to the poor old commuter."

Brian Courtney, 46, an advertising executive from Guildford, said: "Not even in the darkest days under BR was it this bad. I was all in favour of privatisation but this lot are hopeless. Three trains from Guildford were cancelled on Friday and we were packed like sardines into a train half the normal length. How are you supposed to do a day's work after that?"

Charles Martin, a banker from Godalming, said: "It's hard to understand South West Trains when they say getting rid of 70 drivers will make things better. You have

to wonder if they are using temporary cancellations to achieve permanent cuts."

A spokeswoman for SWT, which ran the first ever privatised train when it took over the franchise from BR last February, admitted "teething problems" with its staff restructuring programme but insisted it was doing its best to minimise inconvenience. Of the 39 daily services affected, only one was in a peak time and 33 were frequent, short-distance routes, she said.

A spokesman for Opra, the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising which is responsible for monitoring the performance of private train companies, said that SWT's overall performance showed marked improvements over BR. He praised SWT for taking rapid action to deal with an operational problem. "It is hardly a hanging offence," he said.

However, if the chaos continues, Opra could fine the company hundreds of thousands of pounds for failing to meet its passenger service requirements.

Critics of rail privatisation said the crisis confirmed all their worst fears about the sell off. Jonathan Bray, co-ordinator of the Save Our Railways lobby group, said: "It's certainly astonishing incompetence by management. We're not aware of anything like it happening before. There have got to be questions asked about why this company was given the contract in the first place when their cost-cutting project was obviously unworkable."



A drawing of the proposed Dickens statue

Dickens of an effigy

Continued from page 1
great-grandson and president of the International Dickens Fellowship, said: "I do not see any reason why not to have a statue. A lot of people saw the rebuttal of a statue in his will as a secret hope that somebody would overrule him and say: 'Of course we must have a statue. old man'. The view is that... he was really saying 'Well, if you insist'."

Professor Tony Pounton, chairman of the author's fan club at Portsmouth University, who is leading the campaign for a statue to mark the author's birth in 1812, said that although Dickens had stated he did not want a statue, his other wishes had already been denied. He said: "Other members of the city's branch of the fellowship and say that a more fitting memorial would be to attract more tourists to his birthplace."

Dickens is not entirely without effigies. There is a statue to him in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and there used to be one of him in Adelaide, South Australia, until it was vandalised: its surviving remnants are now in a local museum. And there is a bust of him in the Prudential Assurance company headquarters at Holborn Bars, central London.

The Portsmouth proposal, for which designs have been drawn up, is of the author standing at a table reciting from one of his works. The drawback is that the Dickens Fellowship will have to raise up to £25,000 if they wish to see their dream realised. If they can raise it, the Micawberish result will be happiness. If not, misery.

Labour to force sale of empty homes

By IAN MURRAY

PEOPLE who deliberately leave homes vacant would risk having to sell them under a Labour government. Compulsory purchase would be "a weapon in the armoury of tackling homelessness," Nick Raynsford, Labour's housing spokesman, told an Empty Homes Agency conference in London yesterday.

He also warned that private landlords who failed to maintain their properties would receive less housing benefit than those who kept their units in good repair. This would save money which could be used to provide higher benefits for the single homeless without increasing the amount spent on housing.

Mr Raynsford confirmed Labour's pledge to allow local authorities to spend the £5 billion they have received from the sale of council homes under the right-to-buy scheme. But he warned that the money would not be released all at once. "We are determined to use these receipts in the most cost effective way."

He said it was "scandalous" that there were 700,000 empty homes in England at a time when 120,000 families were registered as homeless. "If there are properties which are selfishly, needlessly empty this provides perfect ammunition to those who resist plans to build the new homes this country must have," he said.

David Curry, the housing Minister, admitted there was not enough money available to provide extra housing. "The fact is that in any political analysis of what voters want, health and education take precedence and housing cannot obtain the money to provide the homes we need."

A future Labour government would crack down on badly-run local authorities by sending in "hit squads" to overhaul services at the council's expense (Valerie Elliott writes). The plan, finalised by Frank Dobson, the Shadow Environment Secretary, emerged after talks with senior colleagues about Labour plans to send in hit squads to turn around the weakest schools.

The remit of the Audit Commission would be extended so that its inspectors could go in to the worst councils and draw up action plans for failing services. If a council or unit of the council still failed to improve its services, a future Labour Environment Secretary would order in a team of professionals, led by a senior local government official, with the council picking up the bill.

Alcoholic surgeon 'operated while drunk'

An alcoholic surgeon regularly performed operations with a blood-alcohol level more than twice the drink-drive limit, an inquiry into the deaths of two of his patients was told. Gerald Davies, 49, a former consultant with St John's Hospital, Livingston, West Lothian, told a fatal accident inquiry that he regularly sat up till 2am painting and drinking half a bottle of whisky with a lager chaser.

He said he had no idea that when he began operating seven hours later, the alcohol was still in his bloodstream. "I never realised," he said. "I tended to drink at night."

Ann Halloran, 56, from Livingston, and Willie Callaghan, 69, from Bridgend, West Lothian, died after bowel surgery performed by Mr Davies in 1994. The inquiry continues.

Brain patient claims £1m

Cameron Sharp, a Scottish Olympic sprinter who suffered brain damage after a car accident in 1991, is claiming £1 million in damages from Cumberland Infirmary over the way it treated him. Mr Sharp, 38, who won a gold medal at the 1978 Commonwealth Games, was the victim of inexperienced staff and a hospital that made major errors in failing to consult a specialist unit, his counsel, Simon Maskey, told the High Court in London yesterday. The East Cumbria Health Authority denies the charges.

MoD homes sales boom

The Ministry of Defence has beaten its target of selling unoccupied homes by more than 1,000 properties, Nicholas Soames, the Armed Forces Minister, announced yesterday at the start of Empty Homes Week. The Ministry had aimed to dispose of 4,000 properties by end of last summer, but in fact sold 5,348. Bob Lawrence of the Empty Homes Agency said: "For the first time, the ministry has made a concerted effort to deal with its empty properties. It is a significant achievement."

Genetic maize approved

Four new types of genetically-modified maize have been approved as safe for human and animal consumption in Britain, the Ministry of Agriculture announced yesterday. Scientists advising the Government have cleared the maize for use in processed food in food products, including biscuits, confectionery and breakfast cereals, and as unprocessed grain in animal feed. No special labelling will be required. The new varieties are resistant to either a cereal crop pest or weedkiller.

Prison search deadlock

Two High Court judges, Lord Justice Rose and Mr Justice Hooper, failed to agree whether prison staff should be allowed by law to carry out routine inspections of confidential legal correspondence in inmates' cells as part of tougher searches introduced as a result of the Woodcock report into the escape from Whitemoor prison by IRA members. The case will now be considered by three judges sitting together.

Death on training course

The public service union Unison has called for a ban on outdoor management training courses after an ambulance manager died on a six-mile hike after a suspected heart attack. Colleagues of Stewart Barr, 42, district ambulance officer for North Yorkshire, claimed he had not wanted to take part in the hike, fearing he was not fit enough. The walk, which involved carrying a 20lb backpack, was part of a two-week course for senior officers.

Legal aid fraud curbed

A team of investigators set up last year to check on fraudulent claims for legal aid has saved the taxpayer £1 million, Sir Thomas Legg, permanent secretary at the Lord Chancellor's department, told the Commons Public Accounts Committee yesterday. The accountants and officials targeted 300 claims for civil legal aid, 114 of which were abandoned. Sir Thomas said he might expand the unit to save more taxpayers' money.

Hospital's £11m repair bill

An energy-saving hospital built six years ago is facing a repair bill of £11 million because its stainless steel cladding is rotting away. St Mary's Hospital on the Isle of Wight was commissioned by the Department of Health as a prototype energy-efficient hospital and cost £29 million, £13 million over budget. However, an independent report has concluded that most if not all the cladding will have to be replaced because rain is seeping in.

Stalker 'sent lawyer gifts'

A stalker claiming to be awaiting a sex-change operation was jailed by Paisley Sheriff Court for four months on two charges of breach of the peace after putting a woman lawyer with whom she had become obsessed through a two-year ordeal. Roseann McAlpine, 28, shadowed the lawyer's every move after seeking professional advice, showering her with unwanted love letters and gifts. McAlpine was freed after a new lawyer lodged an appeal.

Hunt for escaped murderer

Police were last night searching for a murderer who absconded from Leyhill open prison near Bristol. Stephen Mynott, 33, was ordered to be detained at Her Majesty's pleasure 17 years ago after he and another teenager battered 84-year-old Edward Cotton to death when he exposed himself to them. Mynott, who is not considered dangerous, escaped from Channings Wood prison, Devon, four years ago but was recaptured after six weeks.

Mass vaccination to contain spread of fowlpest in Ulster

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

MASS vaccination of Northern Ireland's entire stock of 14.5 million poultry was set in motion yesterday to contain the worst outbreak of fowlpest disease in more than 20 years.

About 400,000 birds have been slaughtered on seven farms hit by the highly contagious viral infection, which is also known as Newcastle disease. A quarter of a million birds were killed on one farm alone, Peter Small, permanent secretary at the province's

Department of Agriculture, said it was too soon to judge how quickly vaccination would halt the spread but added: "It is purely an animal health issue. There is no public-health risk from poultry meat or eggs."

Although only seven out of 2,240 poultry farms have been infected so far, it could spread rapidly because the industry is highly concentrated. Six-mile exclusion zones, in which all movement of poultry and poultry products is prohibited,

are being enforced around affected farms in Antrim, Armagh, Tyrone and Co Down. In the zones, two million birds have been compulsorily vaccinated. Elsewhere, the vaccination will be voluntary and at the farmers' expense, but most are expected to cooperate.

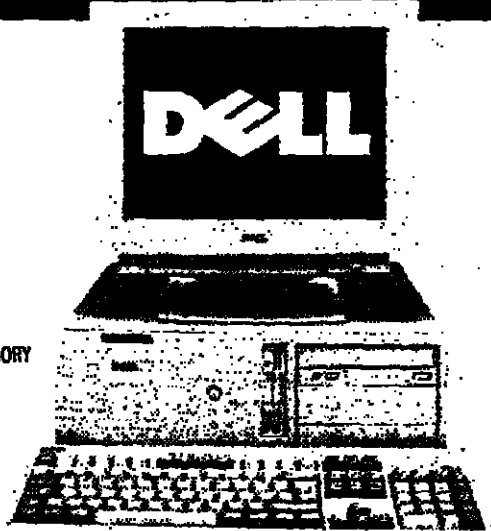
Scientists are to carry out fresh investigations of the health effects of organophosphate sheep dips on the recommendation from the Veterinary Products Committee.

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'Very dangerous' stalker will go free in two years



Stalker: Clarence Morris

By KATHERINE KNIGHT AND RICHARD FORD

A JUDGE was yesterday forced to limit a jail sentence on a "very dangerous" stalker to five years instead of life in a secure hospital after psychiatrists disagreed over whether he was mentally ill.

Judge Butler, QC, said he feared the consequences of sending Clarence Morris to jail for stalking a 20-year-old dental nurse for eight months because he would be free in just over two years. Southwark Crown Court was told that Morris, 38, had 45 previous convictions, including the rape of a girl aged 15.

Two psychiatrists, Professor Jeremy Coid, who works at a semi-secure mental unit at Hackney, east London, and Dr Harold Kennedy, said that in their opinion Morris suffered from paranoid schizophrenia and a psychopathic disorder. Both agreed he was a

"very dangerous man, particularly to women", Judge Butler said. "They said a secure hospital was required for his treatment and they also agreed there should be an order restricting his discharge from hospital without limit of time."

However, while Morris was at Rampton high-security hospital in Nottinghamshire for assessment, Dr Jeremy Resnick, the psychiatrist who examined him, concluded that he had found only evidence of a psychopathic personality disorder and that the defendant was not mentally ill. Giving evidence yesterday, Dr Resnick said he could not admit Morris to the hospital because he had found no sign of treatable mental illness and could not do anything for him.

Judge Butler said he found that conclusion "rather surprising" because it meant a hospital order could not be made, so Rampton

would not accept him. He asked Professor Coid if he was willing to take him into his clinic in Hackney. "No, I consider him too dangerous for a medium-security hospital," Professor Coid told him.

Passing sentence, Judge Butler said that despite the "clear conflict of opinion" he felt the evidence pointed to the fact that it was "more probable than not that Clarence Morris does suffer from mental illness". He went on: "The fact is, however, that Rampton, as I say, will not have him, and Professor Coid tells me that he is too dangerous to be admitted to his medium-security unit. There is, therefore, only one realistic course left open to me and that is to pass a sentence of imprisonment." Unfortunately, he could impose no more than five years.

"The difficulty is this: he must be released on licence when he has served just over three years of that

sentence, and as he has been in custody for a period approaching one year, the result will be that this dangerous man will be released back into the community in not very much longer than two years from now."

Morris was convicted last year after a jury decided that the psychological scarring suffered by Perry Southall was so severe it was the equivalent of physical injury. In a series of more than 200 incidents, the court was told, Morris had bombarded her with letters, sent items of female underwear to her at work and twice threatened her with a bladed wallpaper scraper.

Miss Southall said of the sentence last night: "It's just not long enough. The thought of him being back on the streets is absolutely terrifying."

Sir Peter Lloyd, a former prisons minister, said: "This is a very unsatisfactory state of affairs.

There is some argument in the medical profession between those who say psychopaths are treatable and those who say they are not. But even if they are not treatable, they are clearly not sane and prison is not the right place for them."

He said the courts were in a difficult position as they clearly had to accept the clinical judgment of those to whom they entrusted a prisoner. "If the clinical judgment of the psychiatrist at Rampton was that this man was not mentally ill, the judge must accept that."

The Home Office said last night that the judge could have sought further opinion on Morris's mental state.

A spokesman for Rampton, which is not full, said: "If someone is not taken on by our admissions panel, then there are no powers for the person to be ordered to come here. We only admit people who are mentally ill."



Stalked: Perry Southall

Silent phone calls and a watchful stranger at the home of murdered 13-year-old

Billie-Jo lived and died in fear of mystery stalker

By EMMA WILKINS AND JOANNE BALE

A GIRL who was bludgeoned to death in her family's garden had feared that she was being stalked, it emerged yesterday.

Billie-Jo Jenkins, 13, told school friends that a man was following her in the streets near her home in Hastings, and that an anonymous caller had telephoned the family home but had hung up before speaking.

A 44-year-old local man was arrested last night in connection with police inquiries. It is understood that he is the man with a disfiguring facial birthmark who was seen in the road near the Jenkins house on Saturday, the day of her murder. Detectives emphasised that their inquiries were continuing.

Detective Superintendent Jeremy Paine, who is leading the investigation, said: "We are picking up accounts from her friends that she was worried about a man following her, and also that there was strange phone calls to the house. Billie-Jo was very concerned."

Friends said she had been unable to give a full description of the suspected stalker but that he was white, in his 40s or 50s, wearing a leather jacket and that the incidents began just after Christmas. The description matches that

of a man who was seen by Sion Jenkins, her foster father, staring intently at the house from Alexandra Park, just across the road. Mr Jenkins installed security lights at the family home after disturbing a prowler in the garden just 12 days before the killing. None of the incidents was reported to police.

Billie-Jo suffered severe head injuries when she was attacked with an 18 in metal tent spike. The body was discovered by Mr Jenkins, deputy headmaster of the William Parker comprehensive school for boys. Billie-Jo had been left alone, painting a patio door, while he went to collect two other children from a music lesson.

"There was clearly a lot of fear within the family regarding the prowler, which is linked to the feeling that Billie-Jo had that someone was paying particular attention to the house," Mr Paine said.

"There is a general feeling among the family that something strange was going on."

Detectives appealed for an anonymous motorist, who reported seeing a man leaving the Jenkins house shortly after the time of the murder, to call the incident room again with more details.

Billie-Jo was fostered by the Jenkins family four years ago. Mr Jenkins and his wife Lois, a social worker who has four natural daughters, are deeply shocked by the killing.

Their foster daughter was said to have been in "fairly regular" contact with her natural parents, who live in east London and are separated. The Jenkins also lived in east London before moving to Hastings in 1993.

Mr Paine said: "It is clear that she came from a troubled background but she appears to have been a fun-loving person who brought joy to anyone she came into contact

with." Billie-Jo loved hockey, drama and swimming. At the town's Helenswood Comprehensive School for girls, Jenny Blackburn, the headmistress, said that she had been a popular pupil, and that she had recently shown signs of maturing into a thoughtful student.

"There had been stresses on her in the past but she was beginning to turn a corner and show signs of being serious about her work," she said.

"Over the last few weeks, she was beginning to be a little bit more mature. She was talking about going to drama college and thinking about her future."

Billie-Jo had a small part in a recent school production of *My Fair Lady*, and was elected by 167 girls in her year as representative to the School Council. She organised a "pick-up-litter" rota around the school grounds.

Mrs Blackburn said the school would hold a special assembly for Billie-Jo's year. Pupils would also be asked for ideas about a memorial that was to be installed in three school grounds. She added: "There is an eerie silence in school today. The girls are



Aerial view of the street, with the murder scene arrowed. A stranger had stared from the park across the road

walking around very quietly in shock.

"Billie-Jo was a lively 13-year-old with a strong character and she had lots of friends. There is nothing that prepares one for something as dreadful as this, but my job now is to help the children get through it."

Billie-Jo was involved in an incident two years ago, when she reported that she and her sister had been chased in Alexandra Park by a man. That was reported to police at the time. There is no evidence that the earlier incident is connected to her murder.

Lynne Lindsay, who lives near the Jenkinses, said: "Everyone is petrified now that this murderer is on the loose. No one will let their kids out of sight. We have a lovely park across the road but everyone is scared to use it."

Tom Oliver, 81, a former retired engineer who also lives near by, said: "I have been here 23 years and the place has really gone down hill, particularly in the last few years. My wife is reluctant to go out alone for fear of being attacked. I came down here to retire but sometimes I wish I had never moved."

Police, social workers, forensic psychologists and housing officers will meet in Glasgow this week to discuss preparations for McCafferty's arrival. The council would be obliged to offer him housing and 12 months' "advice and assistance" if he asks for it.

City fears return of four-time murderer

By SHIRLEY ENGLISH

A FOUR-TIME killer jailed in Australia is seeking parole and may be deported to his native Britain. Archie "Mad Dog" McCafferty, 47, is thought likely to return to Glasgow, which he left at the age of ten.

A city council spokesman said: "Clearly there is an issue of public safety. If McCafferty is paroled in Australia he will not be subject to any enforceable parole conditions or controls in this country. These are concerns we have passed on to the Scottish Office."

McCafferty, who never sought Australian citizenship, has served 23 years in a Sydney prison. He has threatened to kill again after claiming at his trial that his dead baby son appeared in a mirror and told him to "kill seven".

He was given a life sentence in 1974 for three random murders while on drugs and leading a gang of teenagers. He was recommended to serve a minimum of 20 years and in 1981 was given a further 14 years for killing a fellow inmate, but is now said to be a model prisoner. His parole application, which will be heard next Tuesday, is his fifth attempt to win freedom.

Police, social workers, forensic psychologists and housing officers will meet in Glasgow this week to discuss preparations for McCafferty's arrival. The council would be obliged to offer him housing and 12 months' "advice and assistance" if he asks for it.



McCafferty: seeks parole from Australian prison

Once genteel resort has become magnet for down-and-outs

By JOANNE BALE

IN ITS heyday Hastings was an elegant resort frequented by Queen Victoria and crowds of wealthy holidaymakers. Today, with many of its grand old houses converted into DSS hostels and bedsits, it is one of the poorest towns in southern England. Drug and alcohol abuse and violent crime are rife and the town is struggling to keep its £75 million a year tourism trade.

In Lower Park Road, where Billie-Jo Jenkins lived, there are six

registered bed-and-breakfast hotels and a private care home for mentally handicapped people. An empty property next door to the Jenkins house is used by vagrants. There are plans to turn it into a home for the mentally handicapped. There are also nine care-in-the-community hostels in the town, with more planned.

Although Billie-Jo's murder has shocked residents, many say that, after five murders last year, she was an inevitable statistic in Hastings. There is 14 per cent unemployment

and 11 per cent of homes are unfit for human habitation, twice the national average. Eighteen in every thousand people in the town commit suicide, compared with 12 in every thousand nationally.

Three years ago the Government granted Hastings assisted area status, making it a priority for EU grants. One resident, Jim Horner, 65, said yesterday: "The place has deteriorated so much over the last 25 years. The town seems to be a magnet for all sorts of undesirable people. They migrate here from all

over the country. Rents are cheap and people think because it's the South Coast the living will be good. They forget that it's an area of high unemployment."

Many residents believe that the high level of mental health and social problems is a result of "dumping" by local authorities elsewhere.

After the Second World War, London boroughs bought land in the town and built council houses. Later, when large psychiatric institutions closed down, people were

"farmed out" to residential homes and bedsits in the area.

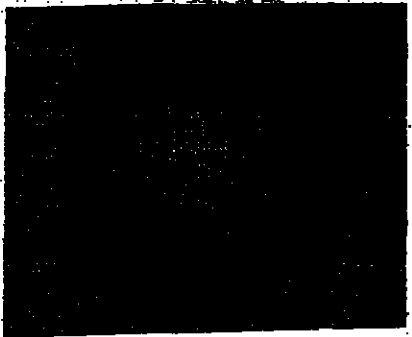
Janet Francis, 50, a housewife, said: "Some of the richest people in Hastings are the owners of hostels, bedsits and bed-and-breakfast hotels, who receive thousands of pounds of government money for housing the unemployed and the mentally ill. There are lots of psychiatric patients wandering around Hastings unsupervised."

One man visiting a friend in Lower Park Road yesterday was typical of the young psychiatric

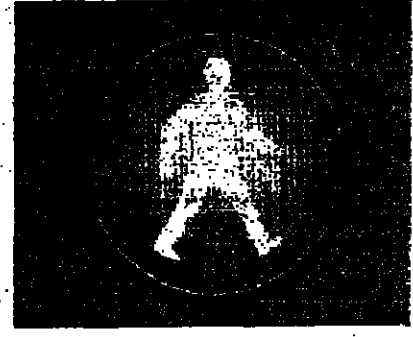
patients in the town. The heavily tattooed man, who declined to be named, said he was registered mentally ill.

"The main problem here is drugs," he said. "They are very cheap and easy to get hold of. I used to deal them myself. I moved here six years ago from Tunbridge Wells to get away from family problems and the police. There are lots of people here like me, unemployed and living in bedsits. A lot have alcohol and drugs problems: there's nothing else to do."

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Married quarters to be made available and pay anomalies corrected, says minister

Gurkhas win fight to have families in Britain

By MICHAEL EVANS, DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

GURKHA soldiers withdrawn from Hong Kong will be allowed to bring their families to bases in Britain, Nicholas Soames, the Armed Forces Minister, confirmed yesterday.

About 900 wives and children are expected to come and 450 married quarters are being made available. This is the first time that Gurkhas serving in Britain will have their families with them.

The change in policy came after the first major review of Gurkhas' pay and conditions for 40 years, triggered by the withdrawal from Hong Kong and the relocation of the most to Britain. Many of the married Gurkhas in Hong Kong were accompanied by their families.

Last year, before the review was completed, the Government faced angry protests from former Gurkha service associations over its perceived failure to guarantee accompanied tours for Gurkhas moving from Hong Kong to Britain. Under an agreement signed by Britain, India and

Nepal in 1947, the Government has to provide married quarters for 25 per cent of its Gurkha troops.

Of the 3,400-man Brigade of Gurkhas, 2,386 are now based in Britain. There are also 830 in Brunei and about 100 still in Hong Kong. The total manpower figure will be reduced to 3,253 by next year.

Married quarters will be provided in the areas where the Gurkhas are stationed, including more than 100 homes in Aldershot, close to Church Crookham in Hampshire where the 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles is based, 44 in Colchester and 23 in Catterick.

Sergeants and below will be granted one three-year tour of duty accompanied by their families while more senior ranks will be permanently accompanied.

Gurkha parents will be able to send their children to school in Britain or receive an education allowance for their children to go to boarding school in Nepal. As part of the review, Gurkha soldiers are also to be



Gurkhas at the Queen Elizabeth barracks in Hampshire yesterday. About 900 wives and children are expected to travel to Britain

given an "equal pay" deal to bring them into line with their British counterparts.

The new pay system, which will cost an extra £1 million a year, will be introduced to sweep away the tangle of anomalies and allowances that mean one soldier could be earning £13,000 a year more than another of the same rank.

Senior MoD sources said that at present a Gurkha

corporal, married but unaccompanied and serving in Brunei was earning £7,260 a year, compared with a married corporal accompanied by his family who was being paid £20,000.

Following cross-party demands that the Nepalese soldiers be given equal treatment, the Government was anxious to reassure the Gurkhas that their longstanding

relationship with the British Army was still valued.

Mr Soames said in a written Commons answer that from July 1 all Gurkhas would be paid a universal rate, replacing the previous system of special allowances that had created the bizarre disparities.

Under the new system of equal pay, all corporals will receive £13,000, giving a £6,000 rise for some but a £7,000 cut for

337. Senior officers were sent to Brunei yesterday to try to explain to those getting a pay cut that for years they had been enjoying a "windfall".

The MoD review will not affect Gurkhas' pensions which have become a controversial issue, particularly between the parties in Nepal.

However, the pension is linked only to the basic pay which means that a Gurkha

corporal gets a pension of £26 a month. The MoD sources emphasised that, unlike their British counterparts, Gurkhas received a pension immediately they left the Army.

The standard of living was also much lower than Britain's, with the average annual income only about £25, they said.

Leading article, page 19

Dying drug addict will not be tried for murder

By RUSSELL JENKINS

A DRUG addict accused of murder will not face trial because she is dying from cystic fibrosis and doctors have refused to operate unless she gives up her habit.

Linda Hargis, 24, is accused of killing Idris Abibu in Moss Side, Manchester, after a drug deal went sour. She allegedly drove off with him hanging out of the passenger window of her car which then crashed into a row of parked cars.

Anthony Gee, QC, for the prosecution at Manchester Crown Court, took the unusual step yesterday of asking for the murder charge to lie on the file. It will not be reinstated without leave by the Crown Court or the Court of Appeal.

Judge Rhys Davies said the prosecution could reactivate the case if her medical condition ever improved. The court was told that her life expectancy was precarious.

Mr Gee said: "The only possible treatment would be a lung transplant but she is addicted to hard drugs and the decision not to transplant would only be reviewed if she can convince the medical authorities that she can completely withdraw from her condition because a lung transplant is extremely rare and expensive."

Miss Hargis was arrested after Mr Abibu handed a package to her. She refused to pay, claiming the substance was fake, and allegedly drove off when an argument began.

Rain fails to dampen rocket man's high-flying ambition

By PAUL WILKINSON

STEVEN BENNETT was claiming "at least 50 per cent success" for his latest attempt to join the space race yesterday after his new rocket blasted off into the clouds over Northumbria. As he set off to look for it in driving rain, he said: "If we get the rocket back, it will have been 100 per cent successful."

It took five attempts for the amateur rocket-maker from Dukinfield, Greater Manchester, to achieve lift-off at the Army's firing range at Otterburn on the bleak Cheviot Hills.

The rain meant that adjustments to the delicate electronics had to be made in the back of Mr Bennett's car while a supermarket carrier bag was draped over the end of the fuselage as it was manhandled into position beneath the black nose cone.

As the wind gusts to gale force, assistants pulled rocks from the moorland to steady the launchpad. While observers, including Mr Bennett's six-year-old son, Max, retired 400 yards, Mr Bennett hunkered down at the end of a 30ft command wire behind a low black wall.

Four times he gave the brief



Lexx lifted off at the fifth attempt yesterday

intense yellow-white exhaust flame was visible for only seconds before it penetrated the clouds 2,000ft overhead.

His hope of breaking the sound barrier appeared to have been dashed as he listened in vain for the tell-tale sonic boom. A signal from the rocket abruptly ceased and there was no sign of it floating back to earth on its built-in parachute.

Mr Bennett, however, remained optimistic. "We have achieved everything we set out to do today. Early indications are that it reached three miles high and that it broke the sound barrier. No-one else in Europe has yet done that."

Mr Bennett, 32, is using his experience as an amateur rocketeer since his youth to organise a serious commercial space venture. With the backing of Salford University, where he is now a visiting research fellow in the space science department, he hopes to set up a company capable of placing small research or commercial payloads in earth orbit by the end of the century.

Yesterday he was test-launching the 47lb top section of the three-stage rocket to check its on-board computer. "Once again I've proved the sky is not the limit," he said.

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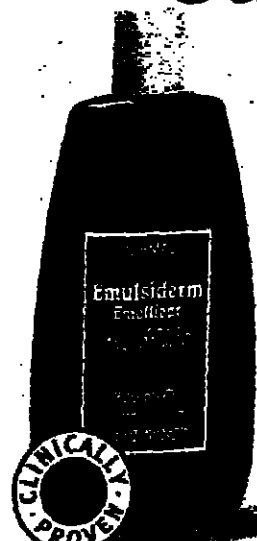
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Their horrendous plight can and should provoke deep sympathy, Appeal Court says

Asylum-seekers win right to free food and shelter

By RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

ASYLUM-SEEKERS who are disallowed state benefits still be given food and shelter by local authorities, the Court of Appeal said yesterday in a ruling that will cost the Department of Health an estimated £40 million.

It said that local councils were under a legal duty to provide the basics of survival to refugees whose financial benefits were withdrawn last year and who had no other means of support. The cuts in benefits are estimated to save £200 million a year on the social security budget.

Although the Department of Health has said that it would meet the cost of helping asylum-seekers, councils claim they will still be out of pocket. Lord Woolf, the Master of the Rolls, sitting with two other judges, ruled that councils must provide food and shelter under the National Assistance Act 1948 which replaced the Poor Law. The court dismissed an appeal by Westminster council and the London boroughs of Lambeth and Hammersmith and Fulham against a High Court decision that they must provide the basics for survival.

In a written judgment the three judges said: "The plight of asylum-seekers who are in the position of the respondents obviously can and should provoke deep sympathy. Their plight is indeed horrendous."

The four asylum-seekers who brought the case are a Romanian who arrived aboard a lorry last July, has slept rough under Waterloo Bridge and has nowhere to live, no money and speaks no English; an Algerian who arrived last July and has slept rough in Hyde Park, London; a Chinese citizen who arrived last May; and an Iraqi Kurd who arrived secretly last August.

The three local authorities claimed that their duty to provide shelter, warmth and food was only to those in need by reason of age, illness,

disability and not to able-bodied people who simply had no money.

Michael Beloff, QC, for the councils, had told Lord Woolf and Lords Justices Waite and Henry that the Government, in introducing its curbs on benefits for asylum-seekers had thought extreme measures were required to frustrate the desire of bogus refugees to make use of welfare services at the expense of taxpayers.

As a result many asylum-seekers, who were not allowed

added their inability to speak the language, their ignorance of this country and the fact they had been subject to the stress of coming to the UK in circumstances that involved at least a claim to refugee status.

The combined effect of these factors, with the passage of time, would produce one or more of the "care and attention" criteria laid down in the 1948 Act.

"They do not need to wait until the health of the asylum-seeker has been damaged," the judges said.

The local authorities were refused leave to appeal to the House of Lords but plan to petition the law lords. Lawyers for the councils told the judges that ministers were currently proposing to take at least part of the burden back on to central government funds with retrospective effect but that still left substantial problems for local authorities.

About 3,272 adult asylum-seekers are being helped by local authorities at a cost of £645,000 a week. The Government is proposing to reimburse local authorities with payments of up to £165 per asylum-seeker a week but the authorities say the actual cost is £200 a week and they are being left to make up the shortfall.

Westminster council said that it was dismayed by the judgment. "Supporting asylum-seekers who are without accommodation or means of support is not a duty which should rest with local authorities and is fraught with legal and technical problems." The council estimates it will spend £8 million in the next financial year providing support and accommodation for asylum-seekers.

Gerry Clure, solicitor for the asylum-seekers, welcomed the ruling. "No civilised society can tolerate a system where people are intended to starve, and the courts have recognised that again and again and again."

In addition to the lack of food and housing were to be



Lord Woolf: basics of survival must be given



Georgi Spasov, left, and Dimitar Dimitrov: adapting to local life includes the weather and the lottery

Stranded crewmen allowed to keep their new life on friendly Shetland

By GILLIAN BOWDITCH

TWO stranded Bulgarians befriended by Shetland islanders were celebrating yesterday after winning their fight for refugee status. Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, has decided not to contest an immigration tribunal's decision in their favour.

Georgi Spasov, 29, and Dimitar Dimitrov, 43, could have faced six years in prison if they returned to Bulgaria after leading the first strike in the Bulgarian merchant navy. They had been among the 50 crew of a rusting factory ship that was off Shetland three years ago when the owner stopped paying wages.

Islanders came to their aid when the crew were found to be living in the rat-infested hulk on a diet of potatoes, and scouring local rubbish tips to find broken electrical goods to repair and sell. They had no fresh food, water or medication and at one point the ship's doctor was polling teeth with rusty pliers without the aid of anaesthetic.

In desperation, Mr Spasov and Mr Dimitrov helped to mastermind a strike,

which was settled after the intervention of the International Transport Federation. The remainder of the crew returned to Bulgaria and the two men sought political asylum in April 1995, with the help of the Scottish Refugee Council.

They were granted refugee status last October but the Home Secretary appealed. The Bulgarians won the appeal earlier this month and a ten-day period in which Mr Howard could lodge further action ran out last night.

The two men rent a flat together above the fish and chip shop in the village of Scalloway. They have been working as labourers since receiving work permits a year ago. Yesterday Mr Spasov said: "I want to thank the people of Shetland who gave us huge support even before the strike, when our shipowner abandoned us without wages, food, fuel or water."

Derick Herring, a multilingualist who acted as the men's interpreter, said: "There will be a big celebration. The local people have very much taken them to their hearts."

Mr Dimitrov is divorced. Mr Spasov is unmarried. They are taking English classes and plan to stay on the island.

Their ship, the *Rotalia*, was among the 100 that arrive off Shetland every year to spend the winter processing fish. Moored around Lerwick, they comprise a floating town whose inhabitants often outnumber the residents of Shetland's main town.

Colin McKay, chairman of the local trades council who supported the two men, said: "They are absolutely delighted. It's been a long, traumatic time for them and for the whole of the population who supported them. If they had been sent back they would definitely have gone to prison. They were deemed to have embarrassed their government at a time it was looking to join the EC."

The support of Shetland has been tremendous from local toddler groups right through to the MP Jim Wallace and the MEP Winnie Ewing. If the Shetlanders had not taken up the cause, I think that the case may have fallen at the first hurdle or been unheard of.

"They've settled in very well and have adapted to the weather. I think they have a hankering to return to fishing and who knows, perhaps they will be on *Ant* again. Now they are just hoping to win the lottery like everyone else."

Six times over limit woman is jailed

A woman motorist who was six and a half times the drink-drive limit after she drank a bottle of vodka was jailed for four months and banned from driving for five years. Rosemary Foster, 23, of Weston Coyney, Stoke-on-Trent, gave the highest breath test reading recorded by a woman.

Foster deliberately vomited over two police officers and threw scalding coffee at another, Macclesfield magistrates were told. Foster, who said she was upset at learning her father was dying from cancer, was found staggering on the M56 in Cheshire after her car ran out of petrol.

Pigs starved

A man aged 44 was being questioned yesterday over the discovery of 167 pigs thought to have starved to death, the RSPCA said. He was arrested after a raid on a farm near Canterbury, Kent, at the weekend. A further five pigs had to be put down.

Police warned

Hampshire police officers have been warned that they will face prosecution if they break traffic laws driving to reach a colleague who needs help. It is not one of the "exceptional circumstances" which justify the risk, senior officers have decided.

Courts gun alert

A pensioner was arrested yesterday while trying to enter the Royal Courts of Justice in London with an imitation Browning pistol. Last week a woman caused a security alert by holding up three Court of Appeal judges with a plastic gun.

Skiing death

The body of Duncan Gourlay, director of the Port of Blyth, Northumberland, is being flown back to Britain after his death in a skiing accident. Mr Gourlay, 46, was on holiday with his wife and son in Austria when he hit a tree on a downhill ski at Kirchfeld.

Highway robbery

Two men in balacavras who ambushed a late-night double decker bus in Brighton forced the woman driver to hand over the cash box after opening the doors by pressing the emergency button. They fled with less than £50 in a stolen car later found burnt out.

BA libel appeal

The journalist Martyn Gregory lodged an appeal yesterday against a libel win by Brian Basham, the former public relations officer for British Airways. Mr Gregory was ordered to pay £20,000 damages last year over claims in his book *Dirty Tricks*.

Outbreak victim

A man aged 45 has died from legionnaires' disease following an outbreak at Corby, Northamptonshire. He was among 21 who have contracted the illness since last August. Health officials linked the outbreak with two local industrial estates.



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Port company convicted over ferry walkway deaths

By A STAFF REPORTER

THE company that operates the Port of Ramsgate in Kent was yesterday found guilty of failing to ensure the safety of passengers after a ferry walkway collapsed, killing six people.

Port Ramsgate Ltd was convicted, together with the two Swedish companies that manufactured and installed the high-level gangway, by a jury at the Central Criminal Court in London.

Mr Justice Clarke adjourned sentencing until February 26, when unlimited fines could be imposed. The highest penalty on record for a

charge under the Health and Safety at Work Act is £750,000.

Two Britons were among those killed when a steel pin securing the walkway came loose in September 1994. A further seven passengers were seriously injured as they plunged 30ft onto a steel platform. The verdicts leave the way open for claims for damages by injured passengers and victims' relatives.

The charges were brought by the Health and Safety Executive under the Health and Safety at Work Act. Hugh Carlisle, QC, for the prosecution, said that the design of the walkway was inherently unsafe and incompetent, making

it "an accident waiting to happen". He said inaccurate calculations, inferior steel and shoddy workmanship were direct causes of the accident.

Lloyd's Register of Shipping, which gave the walkway a safety certificate, has already pleaded guilty to a charge that it failed in its duty to check and guarantee the equipment.

The Swedish firms FEAB and FRAB were not present at the month-long hearing and, because Sweden was not a member of the EU when the accident happened, cannot be forced to pay any fine. However, the verdict effectively bars them from trading in the UK unless they do so.

Vanishing trick marks new show

By ALEXANDRA FREAN, MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

MARK RADCLIFFE, the new presenter of Radio 1's breakfast show, closed his first programme yesterday by claiming his white van had been stolen from outside the BBC's studios while he was on air.

Radcliffe, who replaced Chris Evans on the show with the biggest radio audience in Britain, had promised to donate the van as a prize to the winner of a competition. The plan was apparently thwarted, however, when at 8.55am — a convenient five minutes before the end of his stint — he looked out of his studio window to the street and announced that the vehicle had disappeared.

Curiously, however, nobody at Radio 1 told the police or was able to give details of the van's registration number. A spokeswoman for Radio 1 refused to deny or confirm speculation that the "theft" was a publicity stunt.

Radcliffe, who used to host Radio 1's late night "indie" music show, seemed to have forgotten the theft entirely when asked afterwards what it was like presenting his first breakfast programme. He said: "It is obviously a bit

weird having worked late at night to be working early in the morning."

"We took some advice from a postman we know on how it affects you getting up at the crack of dawn and he said it's horrible at first, then you get used to it for a bit and then you go mad. You only have to look at the likes of Ant and the Dicks to see that."

Radcliffe, 33, who was broadcasting from Manchester with his sidekick Marc Riley, known as the Boy Lard, acknowledged the difficult task facing him in replacing Evans — who quit the show after he was refused Fridays off.

"We have to take care of the audience because the whole day on Radio 1 depends on us performing," Radcliffe said. "Personally I feel a bit nervous about that."

□ Evans is negotiating with Talk Radio about presenting a weekend sports show, the commercial station has said. It is understood that Evans, 30, has been offered a six-figure salary to host a football phone-in once a week.

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مركزاً من لاهل

Jupiter's ice-crust moon could harbour life on ocean floor



Europa as photographed by the spacecraft Galileo

ONE of Jupiter's moons may be the best place in the solar system to search for evidence of life, scientists believe.

The ice-covered moon Europa, visited on Sunday by the spacecraft Galileo, is believed to possess deep oceans under the crust of ice. It pictures and other data from Galileo provide confirmation, pressure will mount for a full-scale exploration of the moon by robot spacecraft early next century.

Dr Eugene Shoemaker, of the US Geological Survey, told the American Association for the Advancement of Science that he believed Europa's ocean was between 100km and 200km deep and covered by a layer of ice 10km thick. Volcanic activity at the bottom of the ocean would provide conditions

for life very like those at the hydrothermal vents at the bottom of the Earth's oceans, where heat and minerals from the mantle spilt out, creating an environment teeming with life.

Research with submersibles over the past 20 years has shown that these areas, once thought to be oceanic deserts, are inhabited by colonies of bacteria and by the Earth's fastest-growing invertebrates, the tube worms. Dr Richard Lutz of Rutgers University, New Jersey, told the meeting that at one such site on the East Pacific Rise he had found tube worms that had grown to 5ft in 20 months.

He had first visited the site, 14 miles below the surface off the west coast of Mexico, in 1991 in the middle of a volcanic eruption that

Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor, at the American Association in Seattle, hears that ocean floor activity on Europa could create an environment similar to the undersea volcanoes on Earth

destroyed all life forms. But on repeat visits over the next few years, he had seen it recover with dramatic speed. "It became a lush oasis in less than three years."

His observations have convinced astronomers that Europa is also likely to harbour life, so long as it possesses an ocean and volcanic activity. The meeting was told that there are good reasons for believing it has both.

Dr Steven Squyres, of Cornell University, said that the orbit of

Europa around Jupiter was elliptical, creating alternating stresses on the moon that caused it to flex as it orbited. This produced heat that could be enough to keep the water on the moon's surface from freezing solid.

Dr Shoemaker said that Europa's relatively unmarked surface, with many fewer craters than Io, another Jovian moon, suggests it has been constantly reshaped by volcanic activity. The combination of liquid water and volcanoes

would reproduce almost exactly the same environment as that visited by Dr Lutz in the Pacific.

Dr John Delaney, of the University of Washington, said: "It is very difficult to say surely there will be life there but we know you can drill a hole anywhere on this planet and find bacterial life deep underground. It is beginning to look as if any planet with a reasonable brittle outer portion may have originated life. Life can start but whether it can evolve is a different matter."

Dr Squyres said that the recent discovery of a huge lake of water below the ice of Antarctica could provide a test bed for the techniques that will be needed to explore Europa. Lake Vostok, found by the Russians close to their base, lies under 4km of ice. Its

water is believed to have been undisturbed for millions of years.

Drilling into Lake Vostok would be easy but for the fear of contaminating it. The drilling fluids needed would mix with the water, destroying its scientific value. Scientists are puzzling how to complete the hole cleanly, in a rehearsal of what may one day be needed on Europa.

A number of proposals for exploring Europa have already been put to the American space agency, Nasa, and the money for such a mission is in the budget. The earliest a probe could leave would be 2001 or 2002.

To find life there, even if it was no more complex than a primitive bacterium, would be "an absolutely profound event in the history of human culture", Dr Delaney said.

Reading experiment failed millions of schoolchildren

FROM NIGEL HAWKES IN SEATTLE, AND DAVID CHARTER

MILLIONS of schoolchildren have been unwitting guinea pigs in a failed experiment in teaching them to read, the American Association for the Advancement of Science was told. Tests had shown the controversial Real Books method did not work, researchers said.

The method asserts that learning to read is like learning to speak. It avoids explaining how letters on the page correspond to sounds and instead says that, given encouragement and books, children will acquire reading skills with the minimum of

direct instruction. Dr Barbara Foorman of the University of Houston reported on a trial in which 375 six and seven-year-olds from socially deprived backgrounds were divided into three groups and taught to read in different ways. The best result came from direct, systematic instruction in the alphabet, known as the phonics method; the worst from Real Books.

In the Real Books group, a third learnt to read no more than two and a half words over seven months — essentially no progress at all — and few learnt more than 15 words.

Among those given direct instruction, only 6 per cent did as poorly as two and a half words, and approached national averages on reading ability, far ahead of the other teaching methods tried.

The Real Books method was promoted by Frank Smith, an American educationist, writing in the 1970s and 1980s. A whole generation of children was caught up in the Real Books experiment, which was at its height in British schools in the early 1980s, when about one in ten pupils was taught exclusively by the method.

Critics argued that, in con-

trast with the phonics method, children suffered because they were given no structured grounding in English. Phonics requires children to sound out parts of words as they learn. In practice, teachers now favour a blend of methods based on the phonics approach.

Professor Mark Seidenberg of the University of Southern California said that the Real Books method, part of the Whole Language system that dominates American schools, had laudable goals — getting children to enjoy reading and appreciate great literature. But it ignored the major question of how a child learnt that the letters on the page corresponded to words and sentences.

"There is an overwhelming amount of research that contradicts the basic assumptions of Whole Language teaching," Professor Seidenberg said. "Learning to read is not like learning a first language. Reading involves an unusual, unnatural skill — learning to recognise strings of arbitrary printed symbols, what they mean and how they are pronounced. Whole Language assumes that children will just figure this out on their own."

Gillian Shepherd, the Education and Employment Secretary, is expected to act today to ensure that teachers learn at training college how best to use phonics and the other reading methods.

Student's plastic may stretch to £90m after chance discovery

A GRADUATE student's chance discovery of a bendy plastic is expected to be worth \$150 million (£90 million) within five years.

The plastic should cost a third to a quarter less to produce than other pliable plastics and, when used in cars, will mean that almost 100 per cent of vehicles can be recycled. It will be marketed by the chemical company Amoco. Geoffrey Coates, a student at Stanford University, California, and Professor Robert Waymouth developed a version of polypropylene, normally a rigid plastic,

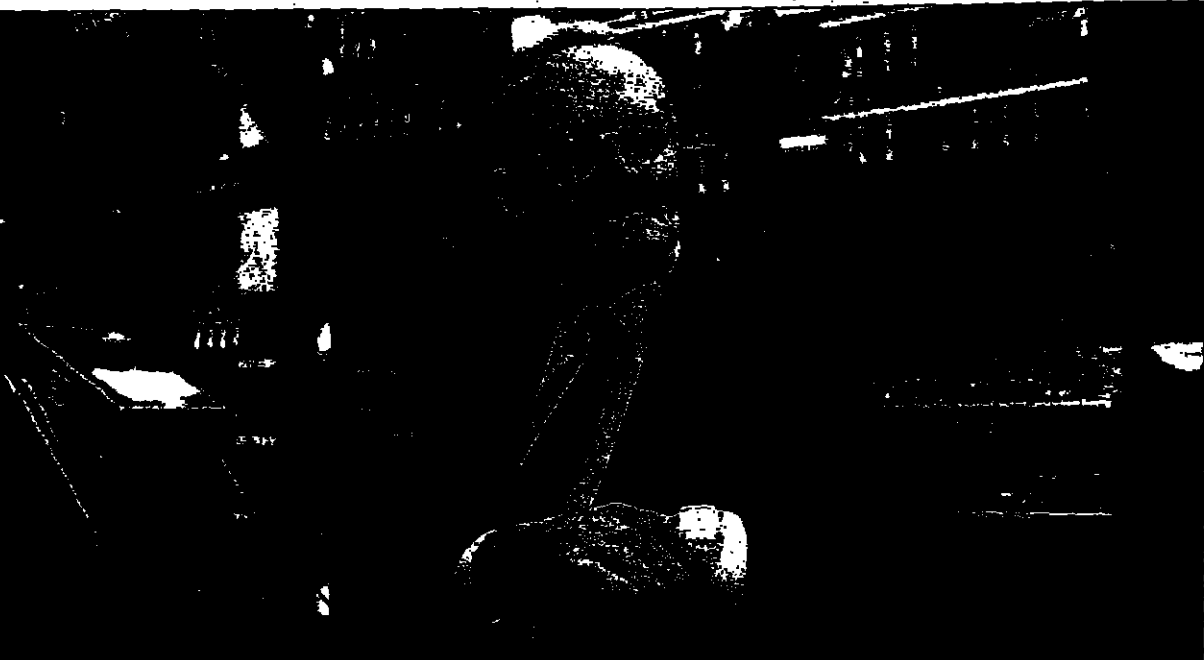
which stretches and bends. Polypropylene is widely used and highly valued because of its suitability for recycling, unlike many plastics.

Professor Waymouth told the American Association that the discovery came from basic research. "We weren't trying to make an elastic polymer — if we had been, we might have taken a much more conservative approach," he said.

Normally the catalyst used in making plastics allows only one type of reaction to occur, producing a uniform product. The catalyst used by

the two Stanford chemists changes shape during the reaction, which means that it links the molecules together in different ways, alternating stiff and stretchy bonds. It can be modified to create exactly the required degree of stretchiness for a variety of products, ranging from disposable nappies to car dashboards and upholstery.

When he found how to make it, Mr Coates was trying something quite different. "We realised that this discovery was more important than what we were trying," the professor said.



Professor Tom Kilburn inspects the replica of Baby, the pioneering computer he helped to build in 1948

Enthusiasts rebuild 7ft Baby computer that changed world

A PRIMITIVE forerunner of the personal computer has been rebuilt by a team of engineers as a fiftieth anniversary tribute to the unsung pioneers whose genius founded the electronic digital age.

The computer was officially born on June 21, 1948, when Tom Kilburn, a young research engineer, ran the first program through the Mark I machine, beating the Americans and making Manchester the birthplace of the computer.

The Mark I, or Baby as it came to be known, was the world's first electronic digital computer capable of storing a program. Its mass of cathode ray tubes and more than 500 valves were part of a machine that stood 7ft high and 18ft long. Volunteer computer architects, led by Chris Burton, a retired engineer, have recreated over three years the earliest model of the Baby at Manchester Computing, part of Manchester University, several hundred yards from where it all began. The replica will be switched

A breakthrough in computing by a team of scientists in Manchester is at last being given recognition, Russell Jenkins reports

on in its own gallery at the Manchester Museum of Science and Industry in June next year as the centrepiece to the city's birthday celebrations of the computer age.

Mr Burton, of the Computer Conservation Society, was inspired to rebuild the Baby as a homage to the men he believes were as important as James Watt to the advent of the steam age. They were "modest, clever" men, he says, who never received the acclaim they deserved.

Mr Burton, a retired ICL computer engineer, from Oswestry, Shropshire, said: "The first objective is to recognise the achievement of men whose light has never been allowed to shine out. I want to make manifest a triumph of British innovation to counter the general misunderstanding that computers

were an American invention. They were not."

Another aim is to show today's computer-literate youngsters what it was like to be one of the handful of people with a vision of how information could be stored electronically, and to give them an idea of the conditions in which the pioneers worked. The equipment was always in danger of overheating and exploding.

Contemporary photographs show earnest, white-coated young men adjusting dials and checking cathode ray tubes. They were men like the late Professor Freddie Williams, who oversaw the project as holder of the Chair of Electrotechnics.

The guiding force behind Manchester's success was Tom Kilburn, a Yorkshireman then aged 26. He was

joined by Geoff Tootill, Dai Edwards, Alec Robinson and Tommy Thomas. They were following on from the work of Alan Turing on Colossus, the Second World War code-breaker based at Bletchley Park. In America, the ENIAC computing machine boasted 18,000 vacuum tubes (valves) but it could not store a program. They were in a race between Cambridge and the United States.

The Manchester team perfected the use of cathode ray tubes for storing data. The prototype had a memory of 1024 bits — tiny by modern standards.

Professor Williams once said: "A program was laboriously inserted and the start switch pressed. Immediately the spots on the display tube entered a mad dance. In early trials it was a dance of death leading to no useful result. But one day it stopped, and there, shining brightly in the expected place, was the expected answer. It was a moment to remember. Nothing was ever the same again."

- 1 The Lord of the Rings J.R.R. Tolkien
- 2 Nineteen Eighty-Four George Orwell
- 3 Animal Farm George Orwell
- 4 Ulysses James Joyce
- 5 Catch-22 Joseph Heller
- 6 The Catcher in the Rye J.D. Salinger
- 7 To Kill a Mockingbird Harper Lee
- 8 One Hundred Years of Solitude Gabriel Garcia Marquez
- 9 The Grapes of Wrath John Steinbeck
- 10 Trainspotting Irvine Welsh

100 GREATEST BOOKS of the 20th CENTURY.
How many HAVE YOU READ?

- 11 Wild Swans Jung Chang
- 12 The Great Gatsby F. Scott Fitzgerald
- 13 Lord of the Flies William Golding
- 14 On the Road Jack Kerouac
- 15 Brave New World Aldous Huxley
- 16 The Wind in the Willows Kenneth Grahame
- 17 Winesap-The Book A.A. Milne
- 18 The Color Purple Alice Walker
- 19 The Hobbit J.R.R. Tolkien
- 20 The Outsider Albert Camus
- 21 The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe C.S. Lewis
- 22 The Trial Franz Kafka
- 23 Gone with the Wind Margaret Mitchell
- 24 The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy Douglas Adams
- 25 Midnight's Children Salman Rushdie
- 26 The Diary of Anne Frank Anne Frank
- 27 A Clockwork Orange Anthony Burgess
- 28 Sons and Lovers D.H. Lawrence
- 29 To the Lighthouse Virginia Woolf
- 30 If This Is a Man Primo Levi
- 31 Lolita Vladimir Nabokov
- 32 The Wasp Factory Iain Banks
- 33 Remembrance of Things Past Marcel Proust
- 34 Charlie and the Chocolate Factory Roald Dahl
- 35 Of Mice and Men John Steinbeck
- 36 Beloved Toni Morrison
- 37 Possession A.S. Byatt
- 38 Heart of Darkness Joseph Conrad
- 39 A Passage to India E.M. Forster

- 40 Watership Down Richard Adams
- 41 Sophie's World Jostein Gaarder
- 42 The Name of the Rose Umberto Eco
- 43 Love in the Time of Cholera Gabriel Garcia Marquez
- 44 Rebecca Daphne du Maurier
- 45 The Remains of the Day Hilary Mantel
- 46 The Unbearable Lightness of Being Milan Kundera
- 47 Birdsong Sebastian Faulks
- 48 Howards End E.M. Forster
- 49 Bridlehead Revisited Evelyn Waugh
- 50 A Suitable Boy Vikram Seth
- 51 Dune Frank Herbert
- 52 A Prayer for Owen Meany John Irving
- 53 Perfume Patrick Suskind
- 54 Doctor Zhivago Boris Pasternak
- 55 Gormenghast Murray Pierce
- 56 Cider with Rosie Laurie Lee
- 57 The Bell Jar Sylvia Plath
- 58 The Handmaid's Tale Margaret Atwood
- 59 Testament of Youth Vera Brittain
- 60 The Magus John Fowles
- 61 Brighton Rock Graham Greene
- 62 The Ragged-Dressed Philanthropist Robert Tresselt
- 63 The Master and Margarita Mikhail Bulgakov
- 64 Tales of the City Armistead Mauphi
- 65 The French Lieutenant's Woman John Fowles
- 66 Captain Corelli's Mandolin Louis de Bernieres
- 67 Slaughterhouse 5 Kurt Vonnegut
- 68 Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance Robert M. Pirsig
- 69 A Room with a View E.M. Forster
- 70 Lucky Jim Kingsley Amis
- 71 It Stephen King
- 72 The Power and the Glory Graham Greene
- 73 The Stand Stephen King
- 74 All Quiet on the Western Front Erich Maria Remarque
- 75 Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha Roddy Doyle
- 76 Matilda Roald Dahl
- 77 American Psycho Bret Easton Ellis
- 78 Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas Hunter S. Thompson
- 79 A Brief History of Time Stephen Hawking
- 80 James and the Giant Peach Roald Dahl
- 81 Lady Chatterley's Lover D.H. Lawrence
- 82 The Bonfire of the Vanities Tom Wolfe
- 83 Complete Cookery Course Delia Smith
- 84 An Evil Cradling Brian Keenan
- 85 The Rainbow D.H. Lawrence
- 86 Down & Out in Paris and London George Orwell
- 87 2001: A Space Odyssey Arthur C. Clarke
- 88 The Tin Drum Gunter Grass
- 89 A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn
- 90 Long Walk to Freedom Nelson Mandela
- 91 The Selfish Gene Richard Dawkins
- 92 Jurassic Park Michael Crichton
- 93 The Alexandria Quartet Lawrence Durrell
- 94 Cry, the Beloved Country Alan Paton
- 95 High Fidelity Nick Hornby
- 96 The Van Roddy Doyle
- 97 The BFG Roald Dahl
- 98 Earthly Powers Anthony Burgess
- 99 I, Claudius Robert Graves
- 100 The Horse Whisperer Nicholas Evans

If you haven't read all the 100 greatest books of the century (as voted by Waterstone's customers and Channel 4 viewers), you're still got something to look forward to. If you haven't read most of them, you've got some catching up to do. If you've hardly read any of them, welcome to the twentieth century.

For an indication of where you might like to start, try the thoughts of Germaine Greer reviewing the list in "W" Magazine, available in all Waterstone's shops, priced £1.

While the greatest books of the century may be a source of riches, Waterstone's, you'll be pleased to know, won't impoverish you. From now until the end of February, you can buy any four titles from the list for the price of three. If you can't tick the books, at least you can tick the bookshop.

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Hogg's 'blunders' cost thousands of jobs, say Labour

By Polly Newton and James Landale

THOUSANDS of beef industry jobs have been lost because of the Government's "disastrous handling" of the BSE crisis, Labour said yesterday. Gavin Strang, the Shadow Agriculture Minister, accused Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, of exacerbating the crisis by making "blunder after blunder" in his attempts to secure an end to the European Union ban on British beef exports.

Mr Strang, speaking at the start of the Labour-initiated debate censuring Mr Hogg, said the minister had lost the confidence of the farming industry. "The purpose of this debate is to call him to account for his disastrous handling of the beef crisis," he said.

"Farmers' livelihoods have been damaged. Thousands of jobs in the industry have been lost. Consumer confidence has been jeopardised and the credibility of the UK in Europe and beyond has been undermined."

Mr Strang said that the crisis had cost the Government more than £3 billion, about £130 for every taxpayer. "This Government was totally unprepared, had no strategy, had no contingency plan and yet BSE had been in our cattle since 1986 and yet they knew full well there was always a possibility of a link between BSE in our cattle and CJD in humans."

The Government had promised last June after the European summit in Florence that the beef ban would be lifted by November. "Last week, the position was that not a single item, not a piece of the ban had been lifted."

Labour wanted a scheme that would allow certain herds to be identified as BSE-free and therefore acceptable for export. It would be particularly helpful to Northern Ireland's cattle farmers because they already had a good system of tracing cattle free of BSE.

vent Scotland, Wales and England from moving ahead." Mr Hogg rejected the charges and accused Labour of doing "serious damage" to consumer confidence in British beef by repeating "the alarmist headlines of the tabloid press". He said the motion calling for a £1,000 cut in his salary, was "a cheap political stunt" for which Labour should be ashamed. "The inevitable consequence of a debate like this is that confidence in British beef will be damaged."

BSE had been a tragedy for beef producers and the greatest crisis British agriculture has ever faced. "But, because of the action taken, we are in a much better state than anybody in those dark days of last March would have supposed possible."

He said the Government had complied with all the conditions set out in the Florence agreement for a lifting of

the ban. It was now up to other EC countries to honour their side of the bargain.

"The ban is wholly unjustified; wrong in principle; wrong in law. It should never have been imposed. But, its removal is not within our gift."

Responding to a question from Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, Mr Hogg agreed there were strong arguments for herds in Northern Ireland to be certified as BSE-free, which he would put to the European Agriculture Commissioner, Franz Fischler. "The case for Northern Ireland is a very powerful one, and the Commissioner knows that, and he will find that I urge it."

Doug Hoyle (L, Warrington North) accused Mr Hogg of arrogance and pomposity, saying he blamed everyone but himself for the beef crisis. "This minister has lost the confidence, not only of this House, but he also failed to bring any agreement from Europe," he said.

The former Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd attacked the "ludicrous" Labour motion and expressed his warm admiration for Mr Hogg and his "frankness, courage and his sense of service". He attacked Labour for exploiting the BSE crisis for political advantage. "If there has ever been, in the history of this particular Parliament, a subject which is unsuited for constant party warfare, this is it," he said.

Labour's attack was based on ignorance and prejudice. "It deserves no support in this House and I think it will get no support in the country."

Paul Tyler, the Liberal Democrat agriculture spokesman, said farmers were rightly sceptical of the timing of the debate. "In the dying days of this Parliament this looks like a typical Westminster party game rather than a serious attempt to address the problems that the industry is facing at the moment."

Sir Michael Jopling, a former Tory Agriculture Minister, accused Labour of a cheap political stunt and said: "The Government and the minister have done their best."



Douglas Hogg leaving his home in central London for the Commons yesterday

Trimble making the most of his new importance

By Arthur Leathley

DAVID TRIMBLE'S brazen demands on behalf of Northern Ireland farmers yesterday reflected his increasingly direct method of dealing with the Tory and Labour leaderships.

The potentially pivotal Commons role played by the nine Ulster Unionist MPs has given Mr Trimble, their leader, the opportunity to challenge each of the main parties to set out their policies on a range of Northern Ireland issues.

He has pressed for detailed responses on fishing quotas, the policing of Ulster marches, the export of beef

and the regulation of education in the province. He has held frequent meetings with Tony Blair in recent months and the two leaders are said to have a "warm working relationship".

Mr Trimble's discussions with John Major, once focused entirely on the peace talks, now frequently include other issues of fundamental importance to his party, such as fishing quotas and beef exports. Last month, Mr Major took the unusual step of overruling his ministers by bowing to the demands of Mr Trimble and other Ulster leaders to retain the education and library boards in North-

ern Ireland. The Prime Minister's intervention emphasised the new importance of what would previously have been seen as a parochial matter.

With its specific significance to Northern Ireland, beef policy has long been the Unionists' trump card. But even as Mr Trimble set down his demands in the Commons last night, he could not be confident of support from all of his eight MPs. The party has been split before in important Commons votes and Mr Trimble has been warned by colleagues not to overplay his hand in promising votes he cannot necessarily deliver.

Why the Tories have faith in a long campaign

By Peter Riddell

Labour wants an early general election and the Tories want a long campaign. This is what the pre-election skirmishing is all about. Little else in politics at present really matters. Yesterday's debate on BSE was a noisy irrelevance, apart from providing an opportunity for Labour to highlight a weak issue for the Tories and for the Ulster Unionists to play their favourite game of squeezing a vulnerable government. It was the politics of the bazaar.

Both main parties accept that the current manoeuvring is unreal. The Labour leadership is rather like a jittery, heavily tipped competitor before a race, having completed training and impatiently waiting for the off. Labour remains the overwhelmingly favourite, with no evidence of any significant erosion in its position according to the latest national polls. That is, paradoxically, just what is making Labour leaders nervous. They are worried that something could go wrong and frustrate their ambitions to return to office after so long.

Labour leaders fear that the Tories, aided by much of the press, will take a strongly sceptical line on Europe to frighten voters away from backing the opposition parties. The regular MORI polls for *The Times* show that Europe has moved up to about fourth in voters' ranking of the problems facing Britain today, while the focus group discussions of floating voters conducted by FCB for the *Financial Times* show that Europe has recently started to interest and worry this group.

The Tory approach is almost, but not exactly, the opposite. John Major's advisers believe that Labour's safety-first approach, especially on taxes and public spending, has started to unravel and that Mr Blair has begun to show the strain. Tory strategists believe, or rather hope, that Labour's cautious facade will come apart under further pressure. This appears to argue for a May 1 election, still the predominant Tory view,

and, indeed, the probable date.

But an important qualification is necessary. Some of Mr Major's closest advisers believe that nothing decisive is likely to happen — or at least register in the polls — until the campaign formally starts and the public starts to focus on the choice of the next government. This can be seen in part as a rationalisation of the Tories' failure so far to make much impact on the Labour lead. These advisers argue that the key is a long campaign rather than necessarily a long pre-election period. This could be used to justify an April 10 election, announced in a couple of weeks if the Government's position in the Commons deteriorates after the expected loss of the Wirral South by-election next week. I have never known a defending party write off a contest so early in the campaign, so that anything better than a wipe-out in Wirral South can be presented as the start of a Tory recovery. But the precise figures will be no pointer to what may happen in the general election, just as the Tory loss of Darlington was misleading in 1983.

However, much more likely is a five-week campaign starting at Easter and running up to May 1. Political scientists are divided on how much campaigns can alter the outcome. Voters do change their minds. But often they have lost office in February 1974 as a result of the campaign (though they won slightly more votes than Labour), while the Tories may have strengthened their position in the last few days in April 1992. This time, the Tories may be able to use a long campaign to frighten some wavering voters back to the fold. But there is no precedent for a campaign to produce as large a switch of votes as they now require.

PETER RIDDELL

Goldsmith to ignore vulnerable Forsyth

By Andrew Pierce

MICHAEL FORSYTH, the Cabinet minister most vulnerable to losing his seat at the general election, has been thrown a lifeline by Sir James Goldsmith.

Sir James has decided not to field a Referendum Party candidate against the Scottish Secretary, who is defending a 703 majority in Stirling. The decision has

surprised the Forsyth camp, because although he is a noted Eurosceptic and privately supports the call for a referendum on a single currency he is a loyal adherent of the Government's wait-and-see policy. "It was a complete mystery to us when we heard they were not standing," one Forsyth supporter said.

On Sunday Sir James reiterated his intention to field candidates against any

candidate who does not publicly support the call for a referendum. The other prominent Eurosceptics in the Cabinet, Michael Portillo and Michael Howard, both face a challenge.

The election will still be a struggle for Mr Forsyth, who is seen as a future Tory leadership contender. He faces a strong challenge from Labour and there is a UK Independence Party candidate.

Shephard keeps up attack over grammar schools

By Russell Jenkins

THE Education Secretary told the voters of South Wirral yesterday to beware of gaining a Labour government and losing their grammar schools. Gillian Shephard, making a by-election campaign visit to Wirral Grammar School for Boys, criticised the "hypocrisy" of Tony Blair and Harriet Harman for sending their children to grant-maintained schools. Ignoring the repeated assurances from David Blunkett, the Shadow Education Secretary, that the four grammar schools in the constituency would be safe under Labour, she said: "Make no mistake, if the Conservatives go, so does this school."

She added: "The Labour party cannot hide the sham and hypocrisy at the heart of their education policy. Tony Blair has chosen a grant-maintained school with an element of selection for his children. Harriet Harman has chosen a grant-maintained grammar school for her child."

Campaigning on Merseyside for Labour yesterday was Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor. He dismissed Mrs Shephard's claims and accused the Tories of having failed to help the young unemployed. "Many of the children

at the schools she is visiting today face a future of the dole. Instead of peering lies about Labour she should be offering solutions for these young people."

Mr Brown visited McTay Marine shipbuilders, in Bromborough, where he spoke to some of the 107 workers there. Repeating his pledge to fund a youth welfare-to-work scheme using money raised by the windfall tax, he said that there were 605 people under the age of 25 unemployed in Wirral South, one in four of which had been jobless for more than a year. This cost the taxpayer £4.8 million a year, the equivalent of 241 extra police officers or 496 extra nurses.

According to the latest opinion poll in South Wirral, where the by-election will be held next week, Labour has a 12 percentage point lead over the Tories. But the survey, for the *Liverpool Echo*, shows that many voters have yet to make up their minds.

It puts Labour on 34 per cent, the Tories on 22 per cent and the Liberal Democrats on 8 per cent, with 33 per cent unsure or refusing to say.

Health followed by law and order then education are the issues which most concern the electorate. Crucially, slightly more than one in ten Conservative voters say that they are intending to switch to Labour.

□ 1992 general election: Barry Porter (C, 25,500); Helen Southworth (Lab, 17,407); Ed Cunliffe (LD, 6,581). Majority: 8,163.

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THE TIMES TUESDAY FEBRUARY 18 1997

Motorway drivers face billing by electronic beam

By Jonathan Prynn, Transport Correspondent

DRIVERS face having to pay for using motorways by early next century after the development of "ray-gun" tolling technology.

Trials of the tolling system, which uses microwaves to detect and charge passing vehicles, are showing big improvements in reliability, although it is not yet in use anywhere in the world.

If the system goes ahead, every car using the motorways would have to be fitted with a dashboard meter costing £20-£30. The meter would be "read" by microwave beams emitted from overhead gantries. Motorists could pay either by charging up a smartcard or by receiving a monthly bill.

Cars without a meter or with no credit would be photographed by automatic cameras similar to speed cameras and the drivers would risk prosecution.

Early tests of the system in Germany revealed the equipment as highly inaccurate and thousands of motorists would have been charged for journeys they did not make. However, recent advances at the transport research laboratory in Berkshire suggested that only one car in 10,000 would be wrongly charged. Scientists on the project aim to reduce the figure to one in ten million.

The Government wants to introduce tolling to raise money for improving roads and to increase the cost of

motoring to persuade more people to use public transport. Critics have argued that the tolls would simply force traffic off the motorways on to untolled roads, leading to more congestion. Continental-style tolling booths have been ruled out because of the volume of traffic on British motorways and because of the land they take up.

Tim Winder, a spokesman for the CEC-Motorway consortium, one of two working on the tolling system for British roads, said the technology was now so advanced that the sensors could detect and separately charge two cars driving bumper to bumper at 100 mph.

Patrick Clipperton, business development manager of Bosch Telecom, the rival consortium, said talks were going on in Brussels to introduce a unified system across Europe.

The technology could also be used by the police: each sensor can detect the size, make and speed of the cars passing the gantries. John Watts, the Roads Minister, who was visiting the trial site yesterday, said no decision had been taken on whether the police would have access to the data but would not rule it out.

Mr Watts said that if trials proved successful the technology would be tested on a stretch of the M3, near Basingstoke before a final decision was taken on whether tolling should go ahead. Lev-

els of tolls have not been set but when the policy was first announced by the Government in 1993, they were estimated at 1.5p per mile for cars and 4.5p per mile for heavy goods vehicles.

Mr Watts added that the tolls could be set at different levels at different times of day to discourage rush-hour traffic or to encourage lorries to travel at night.

Technical and legislative obstacles mean that tolling is unlikely to be introduced for about six years. However, motoring organisations are already claiming that Britain's 21 million drivers contribute far more to the Treasury's coffers than they get back through spending on roads. Labour has said that it would scrap the trials because the system would force traffic on to smaller roads.



A runway protester at the mouth of one of the tunnels yesterday: they are continuing to dig despite warnings

Gas blast warning to the runway Wombles

By Russell Jenkins

PROTESTERS living in tunnels at the site of Manchester airport's planned second runway have pledged to ignore a warning that digging could spark a methane gas blast.

Superintendent Kevin Hart of Greater Manchester Police said that the tunnellers — who often use candles for light — are on an old landfill site which produces the combustible gas naturally. "They have got to stop before there is a disaster. If they continue, someone is going to get killed."

The tunnellers deny that the site is landfill. One protester, a 23-year-old former health worker who calls himself Tobermory after a character from *The Wombles* television puppet series, said: "We are quite happy living in the tunnel and intend to carry on digging. We want to get bunk beds in there, electric lighting, radios and a kitchen unit. We want to turn it into a home."

It's a nasty habit.



Riches may buy a greater risk of tuberculosis

MEDICAL BRIEFING

Dr Thomas Stuttard

WHEN recently the persistent symptoms of a pupil at Millfield, Somerset, were found to be caused by tuberculosis, people were amazed. Millfield is famed as an international school for those who excel academically or on the games fields, or whose parents have a healthy bank balance. The case illustrates that although TB is much more prevalent among the deprived, being comfortably off and the accompanying good nutrition do not guarantee immunity.

The greater opportunities enjoyed by the rich for travel to exotic but poverty-stricken locations may even expose them more to tuberculosis, both on the aircraft and at the destination. Although tuberculosis is extracted by an aircraft's air conditioning, there is evidence of direct spread from a coughing sufferer to any vulnerable passenger sitting near by.


The *Practitioner* recently carried an editorial by Peter Davies, of the Tuberculosis Research Unit at the Cardiothoracic Centre, Liverpool. Dr Davies quotes statistics showing that globally there are more deaths from TB than ever. TB claims three


million lives a year throughout the world, mainly from those whose existence could not present a greater contrast than to the life enjoyed at Millfield.

TB is endemic wherever there is overcrowding, malnutrition, poverty, war and HIV. A patient who is HIV-positive is more than 100 times more likely to catch tuberculosis than those who are free of the virus. In Liverpool's poorest areas, even people living in good housing, and who are presumably well-nourished, are ten times more at risk of developing tuberculosis than those living in richer areas. A homeless person living rough in Britain has the same chance of developing TB as does a patient with HIV.

In one case quoted by Dr Davies, a dying patient had been told that he had inoperable cancer of the lung, was given radiotherapy and was advised to marry his long-standing girlfriend, while there was still time. The patient had already married before someone took a closer look at the patient's sputum. The doctors found tuberculosis rather than the malignant cells they had been expecting. The patient made a good recovery but in other cases diagnoses are all too frequently made post mortem.


A return to the immediate postwar days is needed when doctors' suspicions were aroused when anyone had a persistent cough, weight loss and temperature. These symptoms may be commonplace, but if they last for more than six weeks they deserve investigation with a chest X-ray. Six months' treatment with appropriate antibiotics will clear most cases of TB, save the life of the victim and stop the disease spreading.


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Wife 'pleads with stricken Yeltsin to quit Kremlin'

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN MOSCOW

BORIS YELTSIN'S wife, Naina, has added her voice to those calling for the President to resign. Russia's best-selling daily reported yesterday.

The report came amid growing doubts about his ability to return to full health and speculation that the Kremlin is preparing for the eventuality of his stepping down.

The report in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, which sells 1.5 million copies, was denied by a spokeswoman for Mrs Yeltsin, who dismissed it as "completely baseless". But its publication, after reports suggesting that Mr Yeltsin is considerably more ill than the official bulletins maintain, indicates that the revelations are being leaked by Kremlin officials.

Last week, Gennadi Zyuganov, the Communist Party leader, in a bizarre shift from his much repeated demands for Mr Yeltsin's removal, spoke of the need to guarantee the President's "immunity from prosecution and decent conditions for life" if he retires. This new concern for Mr Yeltsin's well-being has prompted speculation that Mr Zyuganov may have been made privy to hitherto undisclosed intentions on the part of the President.

At the same time, a weekly newspaper, citing Kremlin sources, said Mr Yeltsin was

planning to resign in April. The report was denied by the presidential press service. But a distinct impression remained that some officials in President Yeltsin's circle were testing the waters.

The *Komsomolskaya Pravda* report quoted an unnamed source in the presidential administration as saying that Mrs Yeltsin had had a heated argument with her husband, during which she had said it was time for him to start thinking about his own welfare and go into retirement. But President Yeltsin is said to have responded sharply, telling her to mind her own business.

"I can tell you that no such conversation ever took place,"

said Natalya Konstantinova, for Mrs Yeltsin. "It is completely made up. Naina Iosifevna would not dream of interfering in politics or her husband's affairs, whatever her own opinion."

In past interviews, however, Mrs Yeltsin has made no secret of her concern that her husband could be over-exerting himself and has complained of his reluctance to listen to advice from family and doctors.

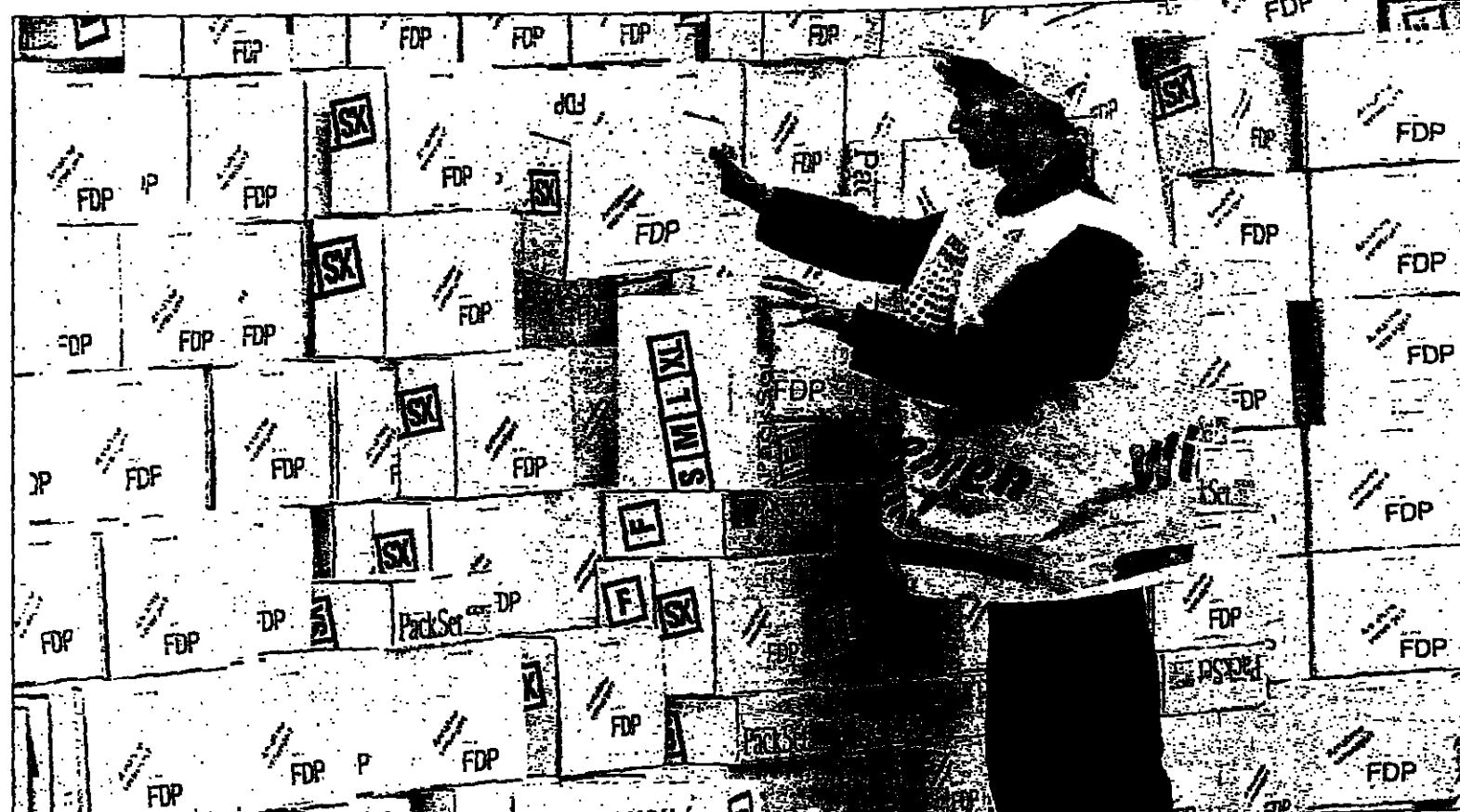
Yesterday Mr Yeltsin made another brief trip to the Kremlin from the country residence west of Moscow where he is convalescing. Television pictures showed him walking across a room to greet Igor Rodionov, the Defence Minister, and talking with him seated at a table.

Paris: Aleksandr Lebed began a five-day profile-raising trip to France by predicting the imminent collapse of the Russian political system, and obliquely comparing himself to General Charles de Gaulle (Ben Macintyre writes).

General Lebed, who was ousted as security chief by Mr Yeltsin and is ambitious to succeed the ailing leader, told his hosts that the "system represented by Russia's political establishment is condemned and rotting. Within a year, at most, it will vanish."



Naina Yeltsin: angry riposte from husband



A post office worker adding to a wall of parcels set up yesterday by 20,000 mail staff outside the Bonn headquarters of the Free Democratic Party, the liberal junior partner in the coalition Government of Helmut Kohl, in protest at plans to privatise Germany's postal services

Bonn resists US pressure on Iran

FROM ROGER BOYES IN BONN

GERMANY and the United States crossed swords yesterday over Western policy towards Iran and Bonn's treatment of Scientologists.

At the latest stage of her European tour, Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, tried to play down differences with Klaus Kinkel, her German counterpart, and said they agreed on all critical issues, including NATO's eastward enlargement. But the areas of dispute were considerable. Herr Kinkel

came under pressure to sever relations with Iran, and other "rogue" states such as Iraq and Libya. But he stuck to the European policy of "critical dialogue". Much hinges on the Berlin trial of an Iran-backed team accused of killing Kurdish dissidents in a German restaurant. If they are found guilty and Tehran is implicated, Bonn has promised to review its policies.

Some of the differences arise because Germany needs to stay in line with

France, but the French idea that five NATO members should discuss enlargement with Russia was pushed out of court by Ms Albright.

On Scientology, Bonn refuses to recognise it as a religion. Scientologists accuse Germans of treating them much as Nazi Germany treated Jews in the 1930s, but Ms Albright said comparison with what happened under Hitler "is historically inaccurate and totally distasteful". She said it remained a bilateral problem.

MP calls for Nazi gold talks

BY PETER CAPELLA IN GENEVA AND MICHAEL BINYON

A GROUP of British parliamentarians has called on Britain to organise an international conference to decide what to do about Second World War Nazi gold transfers.

The group led by Greville Janner, MP, also a vice-president of the World Jewish Congress, made the appeal after a meeting in Berne yesterday with officials from the Swiss Government and National Bank. Mr Janner said they had welcomed the proposal for the conference, which would decide how much gold was traded by Nazi Germany and where it came from, as a first objective. "The second is to consider whether funds can be made available, first for Holocaust survivors and their families and second to ensure there is never a future Holocaust," he said.

The Foreign Office said yesterday that it was too early to reply to Mr Janner's call. Before meeting Ben Gilman, chairman of the US House of Representatives International Relations Committee, in London yesterday, Mr Janner said he was confident that either Britain or America would host the conference. It would be cheaper and quicker if both countries supported it, with the Swiss.

"Swiss participation is essential. This could not operate without [their] active co-operation," he said. He was delighted that Flavio Cotti, the Swiss Foreign Minister, had given eager support to the idea.

Russia 'sabotaging Polish Nato entry'

FROM PATRICIA KOZA IN WARSAW

POLAND'S political elite was gripped by Russophobia yesterday amid accusations that Moscow's intelligence services are embarked on a massive campaign within Poland to block its entry into the European Union and Nato by compromising top politicians.

The allegations were made over the weekend by Zbigniew Siemiatkowski, a minister without portfolio who co-ordinates the operations of Poland's secret services. He said counter-intelligence had been monitoring stepped-up efforts by Russian diplomats to establish contacts with members of the left-wing ruling coalition — the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) and the Peasant Party, both with communist roots — as well as the Solidarity-based opposition.

"We should expect huge provocations from the Russian intelligence services," said Mr Siemiatkowski, himself a member of the SLD. "They

will try to show... the political elites of these countries are not reliable and that they are corrupted and at the disposal of their former masters."

Mr Siemiatkowski is in Germany for four days to discuss the issue with German intelligence, counter-intelligence services and the chairman of the Bundestag intelligence oversight committee. The trip coincides with a stop in Germany by Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, to discuss Nato expansion.

The opposition centre-right Freedom Union, suspecting a political motive for Mr Siemiatkowski's remarks, demanded proof: he said that he would gladly provide it to parliament when appropriate. □ Moscow: Russia's foreign intelligence service yesterday denied its agents were trying to thwart Polish entry into Nato and the EU, calling the idea "absolute fantasy". (AP)

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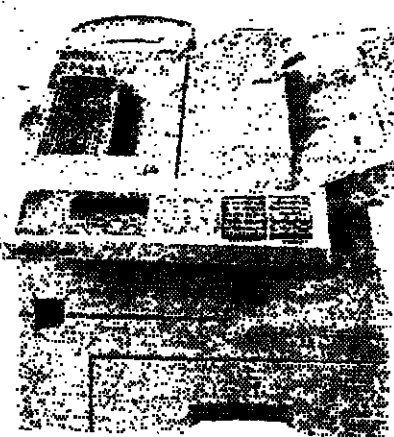
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Beijing chiefs meet as rumours spread about ailing Deng

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN BEIJING

CHINESE leaders were recalled urgently to Beijing at the weekend to meet what senior diplomats said was a "potential emergency situation".

There was no immediate information from Chinese official sources what the problem might be. European diplomats speculated last night that the health of Deng Xiaoping, the senior Chinese leader, may have taken a turn for the worse or that the confrontation between North and South Korea had caused serious concern among the Chinese leadership.

In the past two days, there have been unconfirmed reports that the 93-year-old Mr Deng had suffered a stroke. At the same time, tension has mounted over the defection of a North Korean leader in Beijing.

President Jiang Zemin, the Chinese party chief, and Li Peng, the Prime Minister, have reportedly both returned to Beijing over the past two days and apparently visited the residence of Mr Deng, the architect of the reforms that have transformed the Chinese economy in the past 15 years.

Diplomats say that the Chinese leaders are also concerned over the position of Hwang Jang Yop, the North Korean who has sought sanctuary in South Korean diplomatic quarters in Beijing.

North Korean agents who have been surrounding the South Korean consulate in the San Li Tun diplomatic sector of Beijing have been withdrawn. Western diplomatic sources said this was clearly as a result of Chinese pressure

on the North Koreans to avoid a situation that looked like erupting into violence and bloodshed.

The new generation of Chinese leaders under President Jiang has insisted that it is fully in control of the nation of more than 1.2 billion people.

But there is a sense that the leadership feels the death of Mr Deng would produce a kind of vacuum that it might not be able to contain.

Though the situation in Beijing remained outwardly calm in the hours up to midnight last night, there was considerable worry in diplomatic quarters that China might be facing a crisis of major proportions.

□ Hong Kong: There was no word of apprehension in Hong Kong last night about the possibility that Mr Deng had died (Jonathan Morsky writes).

China-watchers at the consulates-general have had no signals from their Beijing colleagues. The news-gathering apparatus in the colony, which is tuned to China, is barely vibrating with the newest rumours.

What one would expect to see immediately if Mr Deng were at death's door is a flood of "red princelings", the immediate younger relatives of senior leaders in Beijing with financial interests in Hong Kong, heading for home. Nor are there reports of assets moving by those princelings connected to the Deng family who might feel, with their protector gone, that they were in financial danger from his rapacious successors.

If Mr Deng died, the Hong Kong stock market would probably fall 500 points, and unlike its usual rebound would stay depressed until it became clear that there would be no immediate disorder in Beijing or in the provinces.

Hong Kong people themselves, apprehensive about the future under new masters, but who have been accustomed themselves to Tung Chee-hwa, the affable but Beijing-oriented Chief Executive-designate, will feel that the future has again become cloudy.



Charles Sobhraj with a police officer during his few minutes of liberty outside Delhi's courthouse yesterday

Freedom eludes ace jailbreaker

FROM COOMI KAPOOR IN DELHI

FREEDOM was short-lived for Charles Sobhraj, a murderer and cheat who has been in and out of prison for nearly three decades. Released on bail yesterday by Prem Kumar, the Delhi Metropolitan Magistrate, after completing his latest sentence — for a jail break — he was rearrested within minutes for not possessing valid identification papers.

It was an anti-climax for both Sobhraj and the hordes

of journalists and onlookers waiting outside the courthouse, accompanied by about 200 policemen and riot police.

Rajan Bakshi, Sobhraj's counsel, who was about to escort him to the French Embassy in Delhi to get his identification papers, filed a case for contempt of court over the rearrest. However, the Foreigners Regional Registration Office said that it was detaining Sobhraj for two weeks under the registration

Act, which the magistrate said was outside his jurisdiction.

Two international best-sellers, *Serpentine* and *The Life and Crimes of Charles Sobhraj*, have been written about the bespectacled 45-year-old son of a Vietnamese mother and French father who has a Sikh stepfather.

A shrewd handler of the press, he gets his photograph in newspapers whenever he makes one of his frequent court appearances. There has

been a media debate in India over a tendency to glamorise criminals.

The fascination with Sobhraj is based on both his exotic origins and his exploits; he has escaped six times from high-security jails.

He has made a living throughout South East Asia and in Greece and India by drugging tourists, then stealing their valuables and passports. Some of his victims have died of drugs overdoses.

Saddam's son 'needs left leg removed'

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

THREE Cuban doctors treating the elder son of President Saddam Hussein of Iraq have asked permission to amputate his left leg above the knee, dissidents claimed yesterday.

Uday's knee was "completely smashed" when gunmen ambushed his car while he was driving through a smart Baghdad suburb in December, said the Jordan-based Iraqi National Accord.

"The doctors suggested amputating the knee and fitting him with an artificial leg. It seems they are waiting for a decision from Saddam himself," said Haroun Moham-mad, a spokesman for the group in Amman.

Other Iraqi sources said the Cuban team, which brought its own mobile operating theatre, arrived in Baghdad from Iran at the beginning of February and is led by the personal doctor of Fidel Castro, the Cuban President. The surgeon, whom they identified only as Dr Cardenas, was said to have treated the Iraqi leader during the 1980s.

"It now looks like Uday will live. The question is, will he ever be fit enough to be considered the heir apparent again? You can't rule Iraq from a wheelchair," said one Iraqi businessman.

It has also been reported that two of the 14 bullets that hit Uday are still lodged in his spine and that French doctors who travelled to Baghdad were afraid to remove them for fear of causing total paralysis or death. France has rejected an Iraqi request to admit Uday for treatment.



Uday: two bullets still in his spine

Korean defector 'lists dissidents'

FROM ROBERT WHYMANT IN TOKYO

THE senior North Korean defector ensconced in the South Korean mission in Beijing is said to have given the US Central Intelligence Agency the names of several other top North Korean officials planning to defect.

The South Korean newspaper *Dong-A Ilbo* said yesterday that Hwang Jang Yop told a CIA official that as many as seven high-ranking officials were seeking a chance to flee the North.

The newspaper said that Mr Hwang held talks for about 35 minutes with the US intelligence official last Wednesday at the consular section of the South Korean mission, soon after arriving there to seek asylum.

Mr Hwang, known as a close adviser to Kim Jong Il, the North Korean leader, is said to have told the CIA that he hopes eventually to settle in South Korea, but would be prepared to go briefly to the United States in the first instance. The South Korean Foreign Ministry dismissed

the press report as being without foundation.

North Korea said that it would dismiss Mr Hwang if he sought asylum. The official KCNA news agency quoted the Foreign Ministry as saying that, if he had been kidnapped, then North Korea would take "decisive counter-measures". However, "if he sought asylum, it means that he is a renegade and he is dismissed".

In the meantime, Seoul officials said that a prominent North Korean defector attacked by a suspected North Korean assassination squad remained in a coma yesterday. Li Il Nam, nephew of Kim Jong Il's former wife, was shot and seriously wounded by two gunmen in Seoul on Saturday.

South Korean authorities have said that the attack may have been retaliation by North Korea for Mr Hwang's defection. Pyongyang claims that Mr Hwang was abducted by South Koreans and is being held against his will in Seoul's consular office in Beijing.

Hong Kong warning on investors

FROM JONATHAN MORSKY IN HONG KONG

ONE of China's staunchest supporters in Hong Kong warned Beijing and Tung Chee-hwa, the Hong Kong Chief Executive-designate, yesterday that attacks on the colony's Bill of Rights and the possibility of a subversion law may frighten off foreign investors.

Allen Lee, a member both of the elected Legislative Council and Beijing's hand-picked Provisional Legislative Council, said: "Foreign investors are used to the rule of law. That is why they are careful about investing in China. They are asking questions now about the rule of law here. They see certain laws being changed now and they wonder what is going to be changed tomorrow. [Mr] Tung has to face up to this."

He said that when Mr Tung visits America this spring he will face hard questioning on political developments in Hong Kong. Mr Lee was an early champion of Mr Tung and regards him as "an honest man and very conservative". But he disagrees with Mr Tung's view that the law on demonstrations must be changed to avoid "disorder and instability". Mr Lee said Mr Tung "has to understand you cannot suppress people. If he does not stand up to Beijing, we are in serious trouble." He added: "Anyway, Beijing cannot fire him. He has five and a half years to stand up for Hong Kong."

Hardliners demand Jewish housing in east Jerusalem

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

THE Middle East peace process came under severe threat yesterday as hardliners within the ruling Israeli coalition mounted pressure for the building of a massive new Jewish neighbourhood in occupied east Jerusalem.

Binyamin Netanyahu, the Prime Minister, flew back into the storm from his trip to Washington and was forced to issue a denial of reports that he had promised President Clinton to delay work on the site at Har Homa, due to contain 6,500 housing units for Jewish families.

David Bar-Ilan, Mr Netanyahu's Communications Director, said that, contrary to reports of a postponement, a decision on going ahead with the new Jewish housing district could be taken at a ministerial committee as early as today. "My feeling is that it is going to be in the very near future," he told Israeli radio.

Mr Bar-Ilan was questioned about reports from government sources that the Shin Bet security service had warned Mr Netanyahu that, if the building of Har Homa went ahead, Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, would carry out his threat to stir up disturbances worst than those prompted by the Temple Mount-tunnel last September. Clashes then left 75 people dead and 1,500 wounded.

"I believe that no government can live under the threat of such incidents," Mr Bar-Ilan responded. "If the Pal-



estians consider violence as an option, there will be no peace process."

The proposed Har Homa district, to be built on a wooded hillside between Jerusalem and Bethlehem on land conquered by Israel from Jordan in 1967, was originally approved by the Government of the late Labour Prime Minister, Yitzhak Rabin. Some members of the Labour Opposition yesterday joined the clamour for Mr Netanyahu to press ahead.

Senior Western diplomatic sources said that the project was so controversial that, if building was sanctioned just a month before Israel and the Palestinians are due to reopen long-delayed talks on the final status of Jerusalem, the negotiations could be sabotaged before they began.

"Netanyahu is caught between a rock and a hard place," said one European diplomat. "If the building goes ahead, he could face a new Palestinian revolt at the mo-

ment when peace appeared on track — and if he delays, he could be toppled by a right-wing revolt."

Michal Eitan, the Likud backbencher leading the revolt, claimed last night that 28 coalition deputies were behind his campaign for an immediate start to construction at Har Homa. "If this Government will do nothing to fulfil its [right-wing] ideology, then maybe there is no use for this Government," he threatened.

Ministerial support for construction to go ahead came from, among others, Ariel Sharon of Likud, the former war hero, Rafael Eitan, leader of the hardline Tsomet Party, and Nathan Sharansky, the former Soviet refusenik. Livnor Livnat of Likud, the only woman in the Cabinet, said: "We have got to build in Har Homa, although it might bring some negative reactions from the Palestinians and Americans."

Jerusalem's Mayor, Ehud Olmert, a leading member of Likud, said he would send bulldozers to Har Homa, close to two Palestinian villages, within days if it was proved true that plans to start work there had been frozen.

Reflecting the deep disillusion felt by many Israeli rightwingers, Mr Olmert said: "This Government exists on the basis of a parliamentary majority, and I find it difficult to believe there will be a majority for a policy that does not fulfil detailed commitments on Jerusalem."

Pakistan leader puts peace offer to India

Islamabad: Nawaz Sharif was sworn in as Pakistan's Prime Minister yesterday and promptly pledged to root out corruption (Zahid Hussain writes).

Mr Sharif, 43, offered India an olive branch and said that Pakistan was ready to take a step forward to end tension in the subcontinent. "There is a need for a reconciliation in South Asia,"

he said. "The initiative has to come from both sides and I hope India will reciprocate Pakistan's gesture." For the past three years, talks between the two countries have come to a halt.

The new Prime Minister, who was endorsed by 177 votes in the 217-seat National Assembly, gave an assurance that his Government would not victimise the opposition.



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Pakistan leader puts peace offer to India

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China 'uses 1,000 US firms for espionage'

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

AMERICAN intelligence is reported to have identified about a thousand companies in the United States being used by the Chinese either for spying or illicitly acquiring American technology.

A report in *Newsweek* yesterday also said that an FBI task force investigating John Huang, the former Commerce Department official at the centre of the Democratic fundraising scandal, was seeking to discover whether he was an agent of Beijing.

The appointment of an independent counsel to the inquiry, which includes government agencies, seemed increasingly inevitable last night as Republicans issued further subpoenas for documents amid growing concerns of a "China connection".

At its most serious, Congress is questioning whether foreign interests bought policy favours in Washington. Even the faintest suggestion that China may join the growing cast of characters associated with the scandal over the President's fundraising would be personally damaging to Mr Clinton.

Last week, Bob Woodward, America's indefatigable investigative journalist and the man who unearthed the Watergate scandal, claimed electronic surveillance by the Justice Department had revealed that the Chinese Em-

bassy in Washington was used to channel illegal Asian donations to help Mr Clinton's re-election. The embassy has denied the allegation but an investigation into what could amount to counter-intelligence has again centred on Mr Huang, who first met Mr Clinton in Little Rock, Arkansas, while he was an employee of the Lippo Group, the Indonesian conglomerate owned by the Riasy family.

Lippo has maintained close business and political ties with China and, according to the magazine, sold 15 per cent of its stake in a Hong Kong bank to a company owned by the Chinese Government four days after the President was elected in 1992.

The company, China Resources (Holdings), has been identified by American intelligence as a routine front for spy operations run from Beijing. Investigators believe that Mr Huang may have become a Chinese surrogate, perhaps even unwittingly.

A senior Justice Department official said yesterday that even if the Chinese Embassy had been used for planning party contributions there was no sense that the electronic surveillance mentioned by Mr Woodward would implicate any individual. "It's not as if they have got John Huang on the phone," he said.

But the intelligence services are focusing on nearly 1,000 companies being used by the Chinese. It is unclear how many have been targeted for espionage or for the illegal acquisition of technology.

The Clinton Administration, eager for positive engagement with China, is said to have ignored the complaints of its own intelligence agencies. The White House has continued to deny any connection between illegal contributions, since returned by the Democrats, and influence on policy. "The President acts in the best interests of this country," said Lanny Davis, Mr Clinton's special counsel.

Democrats rule in Disneyland

Washington: The Walt Disney company joined other firms and trade unions as the biggest single givers of political donations in the 1995-96 US election cycle, a study has found. Republicans gained more than Democrats, although Walt Disney was generous to Democrats, giving them more than half its total \$1,359,500 (\$839,000) political contributions. (AFP)

Gala birthday party for Liz Taylor, 65, before tumour operation

FRED PROUSER / REUTER



Showing up for Liz Taylor's 65th birthday evening were, from the left, actresses Salma Hayek, Elizabeth Hurley — in her "string bag" — and Christine Baranski

Stars shine for Tinseltown 'godmother'

FRIENDS of Elizabeth Taylor packed a Hollywood theatre to wish the actress a happy 65th birthday, shortly before she undergoes surgery on a brain tumour. It was an evening for weepy tributes, glowing smiles and such sugary sweetness that diabetics were best advised to stay at home.

The film business turned out in force, dressed to impress. The British actress Liz Hurley pitched up in a creation that offered as much cover as a string bag and her sidekick, Hugh Grant, opened the show. "What a body of work, let's face it, what a body," he quipped (referring in fact to Miss Taylor), to shrieks of laughter.

There were assorted musical turns. "Elizabeth, I love you," sang that odd little man Michael Jackson, whom Miss Taylor has long treated as a favourite son. The ballad — which included the rum line "they robbed you of your childhood" — had been



Hollywood threw a \$1 million party for Elizabeth Taylor, full of weepy tributes, and so sugary sweet that diabetics were advised to stay at home, writes Quentin Letts

composed specially for the night. "You are so beautiful," crooned Rod Stewart, directing his welder's eyes at the birthday girl, who wore green and flashed her violet eyes with delight.

As every guest knew, however, the legendary Miss Taylor, whom Tinseltown regards as its special godmother, is in poor health. The brain tumour, said to be benign and discovered only a fortnight ago, follows a long list of ailments, from bad backs to hip replacements to ferocious drink and weight woes. There have been drugs, too — not least of them, as

one wit recently remarked, being mashed potato and gravy.

She was to have entered hospital yesterday for the operation, but it was delayed owing to a cold.

Sunday's show was a charity fundraiser, tawling \$1 million for the fight against Aids, a charitable enterprise with which Miss Taylor has long associated herself and for which she has been rewarded with a 'loyal following in the homosexual community. Before she became a gay icon and a pusher of her own name-brand scent, she did good work in the acting

world, as Sunday night's audience was reminded with clips from her past roles, like the Oscars for *Butterfield Eight* (a film she actually disliked) and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* But more than mere artistic talent, or even the seven husbands, Liz Taylor has always had star quality, which is why she endures.

Others attending the party included Harry Connick Jr, the magician David Copperfield (who made her 33-carat diamond ring vanish), and Roseanne Barr (dressed as a portly Cleopatra). Madonna told the guests: "When I was a little girl I wanted to be as beautiful as Elizabeth Taylor... I wanted to have a 16-inch waist so that Montgomery Clift, Rock Hudson and Paul Newman could put their arms around me."

To complete the festivities, Jackson of Hollywood Boulevard has been renamed Elizabeth Taylor Way.



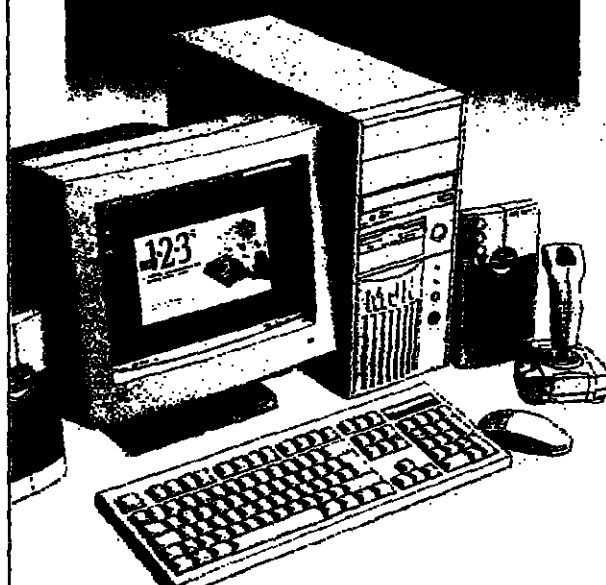
Jackson composed a ballad for the party

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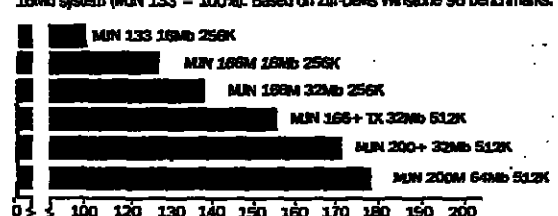


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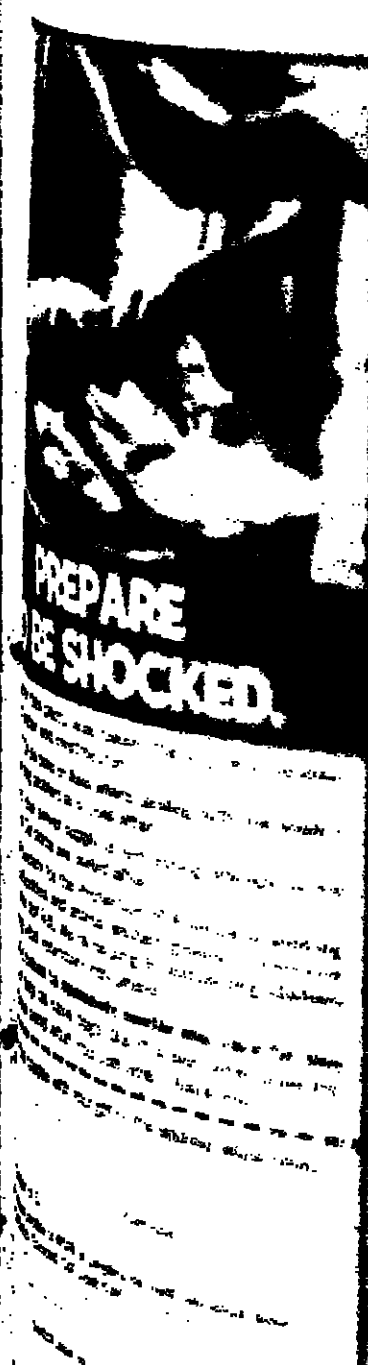
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CHANGING TIMES

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Mexico drug lords 'aided by brother of former President'

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON AND DAVID ADAMS IN MIAMI

INVESTIGATORS in America have powerful new evidence that Raúl Salinas de Gortari used his position as the older brother of Mexico's former President to protect his country's most powerful and ruthless drug traffickers, according to court documents published in Mexico.

If the papers, published by *Proceso*, a respected Mexico City weekly news magazine, are authentic, they will establish a pattern of ties — closer than previously shown — between Raúl Salinas, high-ranking Mexican government officials, and Mexico's most notorious drug traffickers and money launderers.

The five pages of documents published on Sunday appear to implicate Señor Salinas in arranging payments to protect the drug trade. The witness statements are apparently part of evidence collected by US prosecutors for the trial next month in Houston, Texas, of a former Mexican Deputy Attorney-General, Mario Ruiz Massieu, accused of taking money from traffickers.

The US Government seized \$9 million (£5 million), which it is seeking to confiscate, in March 1995 from accounts belonging to Señor Ruiz Massieu, who is now under house arrest in New Jersey after fleeing Mexico where he was wanted on charges of embezzlement and obstruction of justice. His duties as Deputy Attorney-General included overseeing the prosecution of drug traffickers. He said that

the \$9 million were family savings. Since Carlos Salinas de Gortari, President from 1988 to 1994, left office, there have been flurries of unconfirmed stories that he, his brother and senior officials had links to drug dealers and helped to protect the trade in exchange for cash. Both Carlos and Raúl Salinas have denied the stories. Neither has been charged with drug violations. In Mexico City yesterday, a lawyer for Raúl Salinas said that the legal action against those spreading accusations linking him and his family to drug barons.

Raúl Salinas has been in jail since early 1995, charged with masterminding the murder of Señor Ruiz Massieu's brother, José Francisco Ruiz Massieu — a leader of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party — in September 1994. After his arrest, investigators discovered Raúl Salinas had stashed more than \$150 million in bank accounts in Switzerland and other European countries using various false identities. He claims the money was from successful private investments.

The documents also appear to record social meetings between drug dealers and Carlos Salinas. One FBI informant claims that Carlos Salinas, while President, went to parties at Raúl Salinas's ranch near Monterrey that were attended by Juan García Abrego, a drug trafficker.

Abrego, arrested early in the term of Mexico's current President, Ernesto Zedillo, was jailed for life by US courts and ordered to pay \$500 million in fines for smuggling tons of cocaine into the US.

Juan Velázquez, the former President's lawyer, has called the *Proceso* report "absolutely absurd". US officials have yet to confirm the documents' origin, although *The Washington Post* yesterday quoted an FBI spokesman as saying that, based on a photograph in the magazine, they appeared authentic. *Proceso* notes that when it received the report, large sections had been deleted.

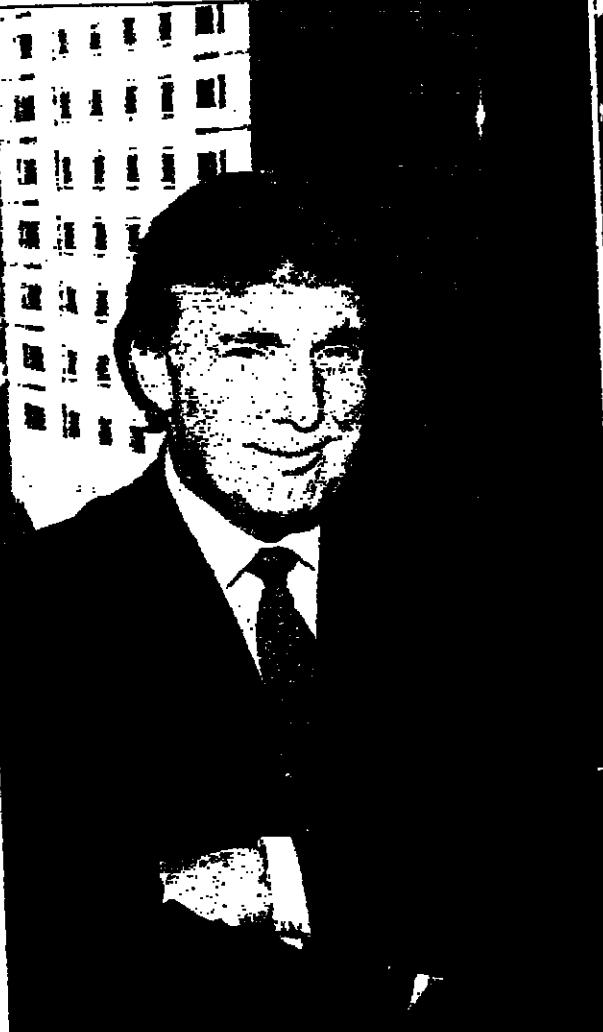
If the documents are authentic they paint a devastating picture of the official protection enjoyed by drug cartels. However, the witnesses, some in jail, may be tainted by their drug ties and could face accusations of concocting evidence to plea-bargain for their own freedom.

Last month, in his first lengthy interview with a Mexican newspaper since Raúl Salinas was jailed, the disgraced former President defended his brother, saying he did not believe the murder charges against him. However, he was careful to distance himself from his brother's financial affairs, acknowledging that his enormous wealth bore little relation to his official government salary.

He told a Mexico City newspaper, *Reforma*: "I can assure you that, whatever their origin, those funds have no relation with any action taken in my administration through my direct decisions or instructions."

Many Mexicans believe that the involvement with the drug trade of senior officials in the Institutional Revolutionary Party may be the key to solving a number of high-profile murders in 1994, including the assassination of Luis Donaldo Colosio, the party's presidential candidate.

However, the public remains deeply sceptical, feeling the investigations will be buried in a morass of official incompetence and corruption.



Donald Trump, left, the multimillionaire property developer, is having his work cut out in his legal fight with Vera Coking, right. She owns a rundown three-storey boarding house in Atlantic City and he wants the land

Seaside landlady plays Trump card in battle against casino takeover

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

A DIMINUTIVE Egyptian widow is locked in a legal battle with Donald Trump, the multimillionaire New York property developer.

Vera Coking, 72, in her socks, is contesting a demolition order that has been made on her old boarding house in Atlantic City, New Jersey. It stands next to one of Mr Trump's casinos and he wants to pull it down so that he can expand his business.

Mrs Coking, 72, is refusing to budge, at least until Mr Trump makes her a hefty offer on her three-storey, 22-room house. Amid the glittering superstructures of Atlantic City it stands out as a reminder of the past, when the city was an unsuccessful seaside town. Next door is the Trump Plaza, a modern glass and steel edifice. The widow,

dubbed "Donald Trump's ulcer", is demanding a minimum of \$1.5 million (£926,000) for her property and is claiming \$126,000 in compensation after alleged damage to the house by Trump contractors. Mr

spent more than an hour in the witness box in a local court on the matter. He and his associates denied causing any intentional damage to the house when they started to break the adjoining ground. Mrs Coking is not popular

the court and duly went through half the contents as she dabbled her eyes. "I raised my kids in here and my house was a beautiful place before they damaged it."

For encouragement she can perhaps look to Manhattan in the 1920s, when a determined Irish saloon keeper called Hurley refused to sell out to the property developer, John D. Rockefeller, who was then developing the area. Rockefeller eventually had to yield to the publican and built his mighty Rockefeller Centre around the tiny bar.

To this day, Hurley's tavern stands alongside the vast skyscrapers of Manhattan's Avenue of the Americas, thriving on custom from the office blocks and worth many times more than its original owner was offered.

"We are rebuilding Atlantic City. The future of this city is not Vera Coking's boarding house"

Trump, who considers \$251,000 to be the fair price for the site, has responded by securing a condemnation order, which Mrs Coking is fighting in the courts.

Last week Mr Trump, for whom every minute in the day is a chance to make millions,

with the local authorities. James Whelan, Mayor of Atlantic City, said: "We are rebuilding Atlantic City. The future of this city is not Vera Coking's boarding house."

"There's a lot of memories in here," said Mrs Coking, who produced a box of tissues in

Pledge on currency by Bonn

Brussels: Germany yesterday brushed aside doubts over qualifying for monetary union, pledging to cap its budget deficit despite fast-rising unemployment (Charles Bremner writes).

Jürgen Stark, the State Finance Secretary, was irked at an EU finance ministers' meeting when Kenneth Clarke urged Europe to move more quickly to follow Britain's economic management model.

Zaire attack

Kalemie: Zairean government aircraft launched an air raid on the rebel-held town of Bukavu, killing six people and wounding at least 20, aid workers said. (AP)

West's problem, page 18

Juppé warning

Paris: Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, criticised French intellectuals and artists, saying their civil disobedience campaign against immigration laws played into the hands of the far-right National Front.

Dogfight arrests

Athens: Police in northern Greece town of Beria arrested 16 people on charges of organising a dogfight in which two deliberately starved pitbulls were set against each other.

Eta blast death

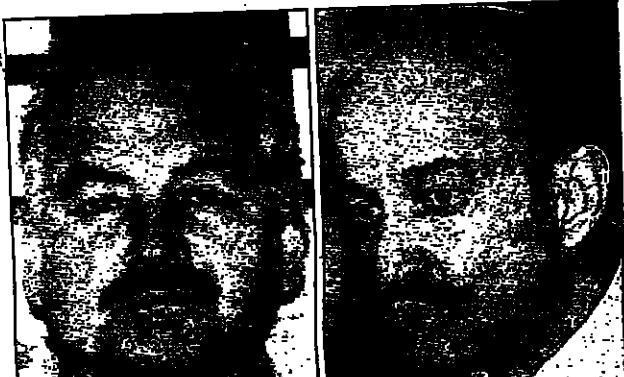
Madrid: Eta separatist guerrillas struck for the fourth time in a week in Spain, killing a policeman with a car bomb. The device exploded as he left his home in the northern city of Bilbao. (Reuters)

Hostage record

Lima: Marxist guerrillas were still holding 72 dignitaries in the Japanese Ambassador's residence here, dragging the siege into its sixty-third day — the longest hostage ordeal in Latin American history.

Mainlining

Brussels: Belgian police and customs arrested seven people and seized 1,160lb of cocaine with a street value of £3 million hidden in a shipment of railway sleepers, the Belgia news agency said. (Reuters)



Raúl, left, and Carlos Salinas de Gortari: witnesses say the two had links with Mexico's drug barons

Goldmans launch book on the pursuit of OJ

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

THE family of Ronald Goldman have said they would sit through a third trial if it would put O.J. Simpson behind bars. Ignoring signs that America may have had enough of the Simpson affair, the murdered

man's mother said at the weekend: "If we could have another trial and put him [Simpson] in jail, yes, we would do it." Patti Goldman was joined by her husband, Fred, and stepdaughter, Kim, in a New York hotel to launch their book about their son. His Name Is Ron: Our Search for

Justice is a 350-page paean to the young waiter whose throat was slashed when he visited Nicole Brown on June 12, 1994. "He put himself in a different persona and he committed these crimes," Kim Goldman said of Mr Simpson, who was found liable for the two deaths last week. "He's so far gone, deep down, that he probably

thinks he didn't do it." According to yesterday's *Newweek* magazine, Mr Simpson plans to leave Los Angeles and move to Florida, where the proceeds from the sale of his \$3.7 million (£2.3 million) Brentwood mansion will still be subject to seizure by the plaintiffs, but any new house he buys will not.

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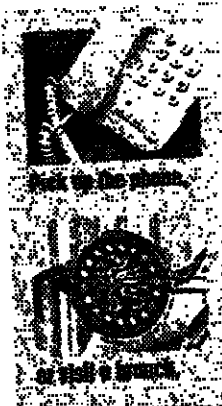
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مركزاً من لاصح

Feeling good – the natural way

In part two of our series, Shyam Singh looks at ways to spring-clean your system and how eating the right foods can boost energy levels

TO MONOFAST, you should only eat one kind of fruit or vegetable. This both cleanses the body and allows the stomach to rest (because no proteins and fats are eaten, there is no requirement for hydrochloric acid and bile, which digest and emulsify these foods in the stomach).

The body uses all that we eat in the form of glucose. Fructose is changed to glucose by the stomach's digestive pro-

MONOFAST

cess. The best fruits are with plums, grapes, kiwi fruit, papaya, custard apples or watermelons. The best juices are from root vegetables like carrots, beetroot and celery tops. Continue this diet for seven to twenty-one days and drink plenty of hot water. For the colon eat soft pears,

plums, papaya (with seeds), onion soup, apples with seeds. For the kidneys and heart eat watermelons or grapes. For the liver eat grilled oranges or ripe pineapples. For the stomach eat apples without seeds. For all organs eat peaches, apricots (including the kernel) and nectarines (but only ripe ones). To strengthen the body eat mangoes, papaya and grapes.

SPORTS DIET

ON WAKING, place the juice of a whole lemon and the juice of a whole orange in a tumbler of hot water, allow to cool and drink first thing with one tablespoon of fructose. If fruit is not obtainable, use plain water.

Breakfast: Choice of half a grapefruit, orange, apple or stewed prunes. One or two soft boiled, poached or scrambled eggs. A piece of cod, wholemeal bread with butter. A cup of tea or dandelion coffee.

Or, fruit salad, with seedless raisins, nuts, plus 25g of sesame seeds. One or two glasses of fruit juice.

Lunch: One or two slices of wholemeal bread with fresh butter, tomato and green salad. Fruit or fruit salad. Glass of fruit juice.

Tea: One cup of tea with a buttered rusk or cracker.

Dinner: Pulp of cream soup; choice of lean meat, fish or omelette with potatoes and green salad or mixed vegetable salad. Choice of fruit salad, stewed fruit, or a pudding made with tapioca, semolina or macaroni.

Avoid all starchy foods, white bread, white sugar, white flour, pickles, vinegar, pastries, sausages, out-of-season foods, preserved foods, fried foods, and follow the above-mentioned diet as closely as is convenient. Eat plenty of pomegranates, figs, oranges, ground almonds, cabbage, spinach, carrots, tomatoes, grapes and sesame seeds.

Assignment: Learn how to breathe out properly. Emphasis needs to be placed on emptying the lungs, not breathing in.

WHEN

suffering from acute arthritis or gout, try a pineapple monofast for seven days. Ensure that the pineapples are very ripe and that the acidic core is removed.

Eat raw food for at least one month and continue to eat pineapple for breakfast. Avoid any sugar or wheat products; drink plentiful amounts of bottled water, and avoid all fizzy drinks as they contain saccharine.

Arthritis remedy: Squeeze the juice from three pineapples, three lemons, three oranges, three grapefruit. Put the juice in a jar and seal with a lid.

Put the pineapple skins with the seeds of the oranges, lemons and grapefruit into a blender until pulped. Place in a glass basin and add 450ml cold water. Leave the mixture overnight.

The next day mix with the juice and strain. Then take 250ml boiling water, 50g cream of tartar (citric acid), 50g Epsom salts (ed-

ARTHRITIS

ible), 25g bicarbonate of soda. Dissolve this mixture in the water until cooled, using an earthenware or china receptacle. As cream of tartar will not mix readily, the mixture needs to be well stirred when boiling and well shaken before taking.

Mix the juice and bottle. Drink a glass (150ml) from time to time on an empty stomach each day for 27 weeks. By that time your body will have thrown off all the stiffness in the joints.

Ensure a plentiful supply of ripe pineapples before beginning the diet, remembering to cut out the acidic parts. Also take homeopathic tissue salts as advised by a homeopath.

As a general rule it is safer to avoid eating oranges and lemons on their own if you suffer from arthritis since they tend to affect the calcium balance of the body.

DETOXIFICATION

DETOXIFICATION takes place in the liver. One of the best ways to stimulate a liver detox is a diet of grilled oranges. Grilled oranges are anti-fungal, anti-bacterial and anti-viral. They contain large amounts of vitamins C and P. When both vitamins are combined they form a new vitamin called bioflavonoid complex, which has a positive powerful impact on the immune system. When you grill or bake the

orange, the white of the skin becomes very mushy and mingles with the flesh. This pulp is the most potent part of the baked orange. Cut the oranges into two halves and grill them with the insides facing the heat. The exposed part facing the grill should look brown as if cinnamon had been sprinkled on it. This colouration will enable you to see that you have grilled the oranges properly.



Eating only one kind of fruit or vegetable cleanses the body's organs and allows the stomach a well-earned rest

SPRING-CLEAN

AS THE name suggests, this is a springtime diet. In the same way that we spring-clean our homes after the winter, you can detoxify and cleanse your body from the effects of winter foods, which are often preserved and rich in starch and proteins. To initiate this change of diet, eat only raw food for a day before starting it.

First day: Fruit juice diluted with distilled or dechlorinated water, alternating with clear vegetable soup from seasonal vegetables. Use six cups of diced or grated vegetables for the vegetable soup. Boil four litres of water until two litres are left. Drink one cupful every two hours during the day.

Second day: Repeat. **Third day:** Three meals of fresh fruit only. Any fruit that you can buy — pineapples, peaches, apples, oranges, pears, etc.

Fourth day: Repeat, plus a glass of instant biological vegetable bouillon at each meal.

Fifth day: Breakfast: Fresh fruit and biyoghurt. **Lunch:** Large salad comprising lettuce, watercress, grated carrots. Follow it up with raisins and soaked prunes or figs.

Dinner: Steamed cabbage and carrots with 50g of marinated tofu — cooked or raw.

Sixth day: Breakfast: Fresh fruit and wheatgerm biyoghurt. **Lunch:** Large mixed salad with three crispbreads and butter.

Dinner: Steamed sprouts or greens. Organically grown potatoes baked with their skins. Baked apples stuffed with raisins and cloves.

Seventh day: Design your meal with wholemeal bread, honey, wholemeal cereals, fresh fruit, mixed green salads, diluted fruit juices.

Assignments: Take a hot bath every night with 500g Epsom salts 500g sea salt and 125g bicarbonate of soda. You may also add a teaspoon each of mustard powder and paprika. Be careful not to touch or rub your eyes. Stand up slowly to avoid dizziness, then take a cold shower. Go straight to bed with warm night clothes.

If a bath is not available, take hot and cold showers. Let the water run on the spine: three minutes hot and one minute cold. Repeat three times.

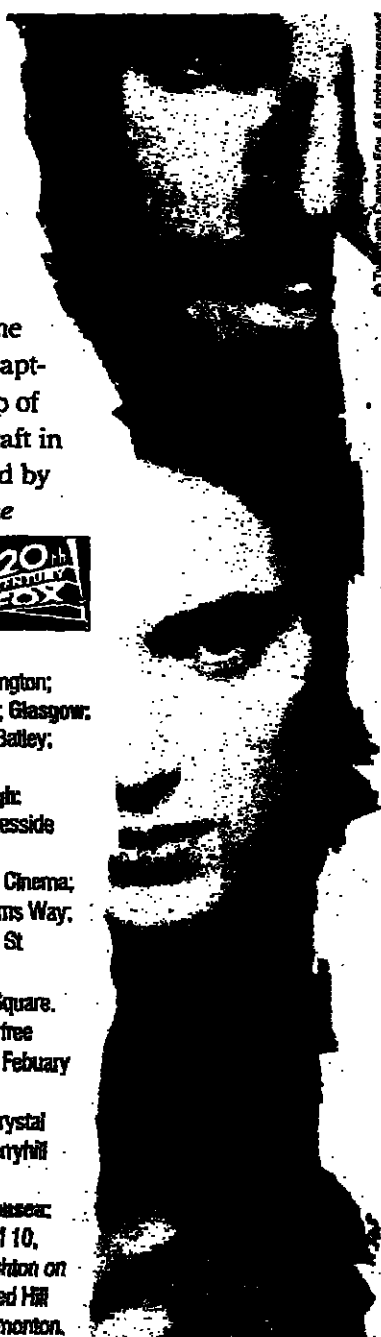
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AN EXCLUSIVE READER OFFER THE TIMES

Exclusive screenings of The Crucible

Readers of *The Times* have the chance to enjoy an exclusive preview screening of *The Crucible*, with Academy Award winner Daniel Day-Lewis, Winona Ryder and Joan Allen.

Author Arthur Miller wrote the screenplay for *The Crucible*, adapting his stage play about a group of teenage girls accused of witchcraft in Salem in 1692. The film, directed by Nicholas Hytner (director of *The Madness of King George*) is a drama about collective evil and personal guilt.



HOW TO GET YOUR COMPLIMENTARY CINEMA TICKETS
Collect four differently numbered tokens from *The Times* and attach them to the voucher, which will be published on Thursday. Present the completed voucher and tokens at one of the cinemas listed at the specified time of the screening (not before — except for UCI cinemas, see left*). The voucher entitles you to two seats only for a screening of *The Crucible* on Monday, February 24, 1997. Seats will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis and are subject to availability.

THE TIMES
CRUCIBLE
TICKETS
OFFER
TOKEN 2

SHOWCASE (6.30-7pm): Birmingham: Erdington; Bristol: Avon Meads; Coventry: Cross Point; Glasgow: Showcase Leisure Park, Bargeddie; Leeds: Batley; Liverpool: Norris Green; Manchester: Belle Vue; Nottingham: Lenton; Peterborough: Boagate; Reading: Winnersh; Stockton: Teesside Leisure Park; Walsall: Bentley Mill Way.
WARNER (6-6.30pm): Acton: Royal Leisure Cinema; Cambridge: Grafton Centre; Croydon: Lathams Way; Finchley: Great North Leisure Park; Harrow: St Georges Shopping & Leisure Centre.
ODEON (6-6.30pm): London: 40 Leicester Square.
*UCI (6.30-7pm) — Please collect your two free tickets for UCI cinemas after 1pm on Friday, February 21: Milton Keynes: UCI 10, The Point, 602 Midsummer Boulevard; Sheffield: UCI 10, Crystal Peaks Shopping Centre; Dudley: UCI 10, Merryhill Centre; Darby: UCI 10, Melcor Centre; West Thurrock: UCI 10, Lakeside Retail Park; Swanscoe: UCI 10, Quay Parade, Park Tower; Poole: UCI 10, Tower Park; Preston: UCI 10, Riversway, Ashton on Ribbles; Bracknell: UCI 10, The Point, Skimped Hill Lane; Lee Valley: UCI 12, Picketts Lock, Edmonton.

THE lungs consist of a number of bronchi. The bronchi divide into bronchioles, which further divide into smaller sets of alveoli, which absorb the oxygen. A useful exercise to open the lungs is to tap the chest and emit a "Yaaaii Yaaaii" sound for three to minutes each day. All plants of the allium family are anti-catharrhal: chives, onions, garlic and leeks. Red onions are more effective than white onions because they are rich in vitamins A and E. They are also anti-oxidants. **Eating plan:** 1. Follow this plan as closely as possible. Drink copious amounts of liquid between meals: water, ginger tea, black tea and herb tea.

ANTI-CATHARRH

2. Eat plenty of fresh figs, oranges, grapes, brown bread, ground almonds, cabbage, spinach, carrots, tomatoes, broccoli and pomegranates. 3. Avoid alcohol, starchy foods, white sugar, sausages, pickles, vinegar, tinned, preserved and fried foods.

On rising: Drink a tumbler of warm water with the juice of a lemon or orange, with a tablespoon of fructose. **Breakfast:** Fruit salad with raisins and nuts. One or two glasses diluted fruit juice. **Lunch:** Onion soup. Add some paprika, a pinch of salt and some coarse black pepper. Eat it as hot as you can stand it. Tomato and green salad, fruit. One or two slices of wholemeal bread with unsalted butter. Fruit juice, vegetable bouillon, or Marmite dissolved in hot water. **Dinner:** Broccoli, steamed with lemon, tamarind and coarse black pepper. Potatoes. Green salad or raw mixed vegetable salad. As much onion soup as you like. Lean meat, fish or omelette. Tapioca or buckwheat pudding.

Assignments: Go for long walks in the countryside; when your nose is blocked, add a few drops of eucalyptus oil, camphor oil and tea-tree oil to hot water and then inhale; massage the feet to stimulate the lungs.

THIS diet will not cure any of the following disorders, but it will help to minimise the effect of the symptoms: ● All forms of neuralgia ● Sleep disorders ● Vertigo ● Headaches ● Impaired consciousness ● Tremors ● Paralysis ● Nerve root disorders **Breakfast:** Two tablespoons sesame seeds soaked in water overnight, or 20 almonds soaked overnight and peeled, and raw or dried fruit.

NERVES

soaked overnight. Midday: 25-50g cream cheese, raw salad (including any raw vegetables shredded, grated or minced) with walnut oil and lemon juice dressing. Salads make the gastric juices work. Follow it with 75-100g dried fruit, preferably apples, dates and pineapples. **Evening:** Wholemeal bread and butter or cereal with cream. Salad again with nuts, cream or honey. Eat a cup of boiled millet.

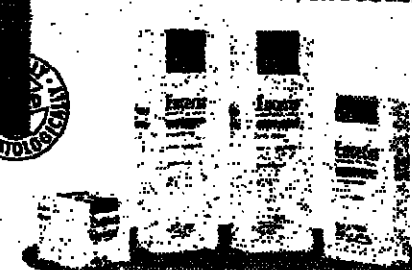
Night: One cup of instant vegetable bouillon. **Drinks:** Barley water, dandelion coffee, bran tea (one tablespoon of bran per mug). Boil and let simmer for three to five minutes; fresh vegetable juices, diluted milk, coffee (freshly ground, one to two cups a day) with cold-pressed honey. **Drinks:** About half to three-quarters of a litre of liquids a day between meals. **Assignment:** Hot and cold showers on the spine, three minutes hot and one minute cold. Finish with a cold one.

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How I was cured of nightmares



Nightmares happen to people who think they are good and fail to acknowledge that they are also evil, says Fay Weldon

I suffered from nightmares when I was a child and believed in ghosts until I was well into my twenties. I had some justifications: I would "see" apparitions from time to time — people who were there, then suddenly not there, or be followed by shadows with nothing observable to cause them. I would "hear" noises in the night, where no noise ought to be, and so forth. When I was 18, I dreamt my grandmother came to see me in the middle of the night: she told me "I'm dying, I'm dying", and then said goodbye to me and smiled. As it happened she'd had a heart attack at the time I had the dream and had only lived to discuss the dream with me. Telepathy more than a haunting, certainly, and that was a "good" dream — at least she was smiling — and useful, because I called home the next day; but other dreams could bring terror with them and the apparitions discouraged one from going where one was obliged to go. Premonitions of disaster sometimes came with these dubious perceptions, as a total eclipse of the sun seems to do in India, and as irrationally. But disaster never happened. As for the nightmares, I started with the notion that they came from somehow outside me: that they were invasions of pure evil which happened when one was asleep and defenceless and unable to fight back the dreamer pure victim. Poor me, poor, frightened — me. Nightmares happen to me. I think, to people who believe they are good, and fail to acknowledge their own dreadfulness. Children are always the heroes of their own lives as one grows older one comes to realise one is villain, too.

In my late twenties, I was cured of nightmares. This is how it happened. I'd had a recurring "bad dream" for years, in which I was making my way up a mountain in a place which looked like Transylvania — certainly vampire country. Night was falling. We — a vague group — stopped at a country inn. I would be given a room off an upper corridor, and go to bed and try to sleep. But moonlit forest branches scabbled against the window, and eventually claws, too, and the window would crack, and howling, demonic creatures spring at me — and I'd awake, and the terror last for hours.

Then one night reality caught up with the dream. I went on a touring holiday in Austria with my then husband, 25 years older than myself, my small child and a "girl to help". We had a sedate blue Ford Anglia car, but super-charged so my

husband could overtake dramatically where no safe overtaking seemed possible, missing death by inches, leaving pale and terrified faces behind him. For some reason I took this pastime for granted — perhaps because I was so grateful for a roof over my head I didn't like to argue.

Night was falling as we took the mountain road out of Innsbruck. To my terror, I recognised the road as the one in my dream. With every curve the place became more familiar. Trees bending in over the road, bare slabs of rock gleaming in the moonlight. We stopped at the first auberge we came to — thank God it wasn't at all like the one in the dream. I remember my relief. But then it turned out the inn was full. Staff led us to an annex — and there the nightmare house stood, in all its gabled, steep-roofed detail. Up the familiar stairs with the carved oak banisters, along the upstairs corridor, the white-aproned maid showed us our two rooms, facing each other. In the room to the right, moonlit branches scabbled against the pane — the one to the left looked out over the valley, calm, benign and still. I put the girl and my child in the haunted room, and chose the other for myself and my husband. I am not proud of it. Mothers should not behave like this. They should give up their lives and sanity for their children. I knew the better way, but chose the worse. I was not a good person.

I passed a quiet night. I even slept, with my relief was short-lived — I spent the next few days in terror, waiting for nemesis for the car crash, for the fatal accident to me and mine. It did not come.

I never had the dream again. I don't think I've had a nightmare since. There was no way I could pretend any longer that I was so nice and good that evil must come from outside me, not inside me. I realised I was responsible for my own nightmares. They were self-generated. The fact of the matter was that I was as cowardly and self-interested as anyone else. Nor could I hide from myself that my husband's overbearing habits scared me to bits and would kill us all sooner or later, child included. I ran away soon after and restarted my life.

If dreams are how we tell ourselves what we need to know, mine were just having to shake me very hard indeed. I was being so obdurate. Nightmares are desperate things.

Extracted from *The Tiger Garden*, Sepp's tale, £9.99



He-women extraordinaire: Margaret Thatcher (although she was rather a relic of her upbringing) and Sigourney Weaver playing the vamp with Harrison Ford in *Working Girl*



Girl power: the she-women you can rely on — the Spice Girls, Bianca and Tiffany from *EastEnders* and the warm-hearted women from the American sitcom *Friends*



He-women and she-women

They have all the benefits of feminism, but none of the battle scars. Giles Coren reports on the advocates of women's glib

For the past couple of weeks, the women gathered around the office chocolate machine in the middle of the afternoon have been consumed, it seems, by a single obsession. In the local news-agent, and in the Waitrose carpark, in the corridors of the House, and on the terraces at Chelsea, women have been congregating to assert the possession of an eighth sense (or is it a ninth).

"You can sniff them out a mile away," they say.

Who?

"Oh, you wouldn't understand."

Try me.

"The he-women. Surely you've heard of them?"

Tessa Sanderson? Brigitte Nielsen? Jet from *Gladiators*? Or are he-women, perhaps, what it-girls grow into, once they have eschewed she-hood? Apparently not. The concept stems from a recent piece in the *Sunday Mirror* by Amanda Platell, at the time acting editor of the paper. For a sensory perception to have developed in half our species these he-women must have been around for longer than a fortnight, but it is Ms Platell who has given the condition a name.

The article in question offered an indictment of Nicola Horlick by an outraged "sister". On the first day of February, Ms Horlick, whose perpetua until then had made her something of an icon among businesswomen, said: "most women aren't cut out for jobs at the top. They do not work hard enough. They are pathetic and they cry. All they do is moan and whinge."

And Ms Horlick is ousted as a he-woman. He-women, Ms Platell says "feel threatened by women. It dilutes their own uniqueness, and they do everything they can to hold other women down. They are worse than the worst male chauvinists." Really? Worse than Bernard Manning, Jim Davidson and the Duke of Edinburgh?

If by "he-woman" what is meant is the sort of woman who surrounds herself with men, does nothing to promote the interests of her own sex, and does all she can to kill off the competition, then the model for the modern he-woman must be Sigourney Weaver's fire-breathing businesswoman in *Working Girl*. In Mike Nichols' 1988 film, Melanie Griffith takes a job as a secretary with a female boss, hopes of promotion, and hopes for better treatment than she has suffered at the hands of men, only to find that the new alternative is far worse. Weaver belittles her in public, squashes her efforts at self-

improvement, and ultimately steals her ideas for her own profit.

"I saw it again on video and it rang so true," says Diane Turner (not her real name), a bond trader for a large European bank. "I am perceived in the office as being just like the Sigourney Weaver character, and now they have started calling me 'Horlick'. But I don't feel like that at all. I feel like the downtrodden but essentially sweet and loving Melanie Griffith type."

So why the confusion? "I think it is because successful women used to be like that, and people's imaginations have not yet had time to readjust," Ms Turner says. "In the past, I have certainly worked for one he-woman, a woman who mocked me in front of men, and sat there cackling abuse at me while male contemporaries leapt to fight her cigarettes and receive the flutters of her eyelashes, as well as responsibilities she never gave me."

"She would always say things like, 'Just because I am a woman and a director, don't expect that you are capable of it. I am not prepared to invest time and the benefit of my experience in you, when you are just going to leave and have children before you're 30. If a man had talked to me like that, I could have made a reasonable case for discrimination, not that I would have done."

ist Kathy Lette, for one, is taking no chances. "The he-women betray their sex," says the author of *Mad Cows and Foetal Attraction*. "They have all the benefits of feminism, but none of the battle scars — they are advocates of women's glib."

And while it is impossible not to sympathise with Ms Platell's thesis (generated, it is said, by her own suffering at the hands of unseemly-women in the workplace), there is no evidence of a chronic breakdown in sisterly solidarity on her own part, that she elected to create this inter-cine strife in the first place?

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Africa is still a problem for all of us

Tom Stacey says Africa's problems need to be unscrambled, most of all in the former French colonies

A scramble is under way in Africa's heartland that recalls the scramble of a century ago, and while the scramble is still at the heart of it, then, the scramble was the British, Germans, French and Belgians, each thrusting aside the Arabs. The scramble today is American (thrusting aside the Arabs) and French, with the British also on the scene.

The rewards then were slaves and ivory for the Arabs, and, for the Europeans, saved souls and colonial territories — and all that might flow from them. The rewards today are spheres of influence, and all that flows from them in terms of power and wealth. And for certain Arabs, there is the prospect of the spread of fundamentalist Islam.

A century ago, the contest was bold and overt, now it is covert. Now, as then, avarice and altruism run side by side.

The colonial will evaporated scarcely three generations after the carve-up, and the metropolitan powers tossed independence to this or that territory, with a ballot box masquerading as democracy.

The Congo fell apart instantly. Zanzibar and Tanganyika, Uganda and Kenya deteriorated in varying styles at various speeds. Civil war erupted in south Sudan. The Central African Republic splintered into barbarism.

In Rwanda and Burundi the vote overturned the social order of generations by passing power from the Tutsi aristocracy to the Hutu majority. Mutual massacre ensued and Tutsis in their tens of thousands fled to Uganda.

As the Cold War faded, aid became the thing, whether supplied through the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the UN, or directly from the donor countries to their African protégés. But aid became ever more sharply conditional. America's economic and political weight predominated. Yet the United States had come lately to the region, its experience negligible, its knowledge sparse and skewed. On the ground, black and post-colonial *Realpolitik* was separately at work.

The French in Africa today are pushy, patriotic and paternalistic. When the Belgians threw in the sponge in Rwanda-Urundi, as they did in the Congo, France saw its chance to extend its patronage over three "new" countries where French was the common tongue. In the late 1980s, defence agreements with both of the Hutu governments brought French military participation in Rwanda's attempt to contain the guerrilla war conducted by well-armed and trained Tutsis fighting as the Rwanda Patriotic Front.

So who was arming and training the Patriotic Front? Indeed, who composed it? Well, since 1986 Uganda's guerrilla president has been a Tutsi, Yoweri Kagame, who adopted the sobriquet "Museveni" (Mr. Seven) after the little band around which he formed the largely Tutsi guerrilla force that finally won him power in Kampala. One of the early band was Paul Kagame, the vice-president and effective leader of today's Rwanda. The cream of Museveni's army was not easily distinguishable from the Patriotic Front.

Museveni could not be worse than his predecessors, and might prove better. Three years later, in 1989, Lyndia Chalker became

dispenser of Britain's overseas aid, and Museveni her golden protégé. He has made her look successful. Barones Chalker, not one to underestimate her queenly role, has championed him indefatigably in the American-dominated forums of international aid, as she has simultaneously championed the waiving of debts. Uganda today, with half its budget provided by aid, owes on a majestic scale. Kampala is stuffed with aid organisations manned by high-earning foreigners.

Since the late 1980s, America has been sucked into the region by the Somali crisis, Islamic fundamentalism in Khartoum, and the humanitarian disaster of Rwanda. What America saw in Sudan was the Government of General Bashir spreading Iranian-style Muslim fundamentalism which would destabilise the Middle East and northern Africa. So Bashir must be weakened. One way to achieve that was to pour money and weapons via Uganda into the black, non-Muslim rebels of John Garang's Sudan People's Liberation Army.

Following the simultaneous murder of the Hutu presidents of both Rwanda and Burundi in 1994, the first to be chopped up in Rwanda were Tutsi by Hutu.

The Tutsi (who make up 11 per cent of Rwanda's population) instantly became the goodies while the Hutus became the baddies. So

American-led aid poured in, much of it via Uganda, and the Hutu governments of both countries collapsed. But the Tutsi are on top now. They have the power, the weapons — they never surrendered them — and the international money.

And today the Tutsis have the eastern part of Zaire, under the command of Museveni's guerrilla place-man, Laurent Kabila, who dreams that from his enclave he will roll up the map of Zaire from the east, as his backer Museveni rolled up Uganda from the south-west.

Already his authority reaches into copper-rich Shaba (Katanga), his home ground, and he threatens Kisangani (Stanleyville) in the north, a stone's throw from Mobutu's own fortified tribal base. Great territories and potential wealth, and the power of gods and cultures are seemingly at stake. In all this, a dependable Museveni is seen as vital by America and Britain.

Yet the French are opposed. Having backed the Hutus, they also trained and armed the falling forces of Zaire's Mobutu, who is now back at his remote palace after treatment for cancer in Europe. France is smarting in its temporary eclipse. Yet the French ring the area. They have troops across the river from Kinshasa (in Brazzaville) and from Kisangani, and (in Bangui). They have more in Djibouti in the Horn. The French know Africa, are pragmatic, intensely possessive of their linguistic area, and accustomed to responding to calls in Africa wherever diplomatically and strategically feasible.

As vast Zaire crumbles, Museveni's Tutsi adventurism is catching up with his backers in the heart of a very African darkness. After the Somali fiasco, America's State Department coined a wishful adage, "Let Africa solve Africa's problems". But Africa won't, and can't — not on this scale, and least of all where French is spoken and there is scrambling to be done.

From Tote privatisation to windfall taxes, Mr Brown's plans are falling apart, says Woodrow Wyatt

The closer we get to the election, the more closely Labour's possible methods of raising extra money to pay for at least some of their election pledges are examined. They are criticised by their promise, if they keep it, to follow the present Government's spending plans for the next two years and not to raise personal income tax. It is desperate work in Gordon Brown's office, scratching around for plums to pick.

Over the weekend, the idea of privatising the Tote was floated — in the belief that it is state-owned. Presumably this emanated from Gordon Brown's circle. I laughed. As Chairman of the Tote I am very conscious of the Government's admission to the all-party committee that examined the Tote in 1991, that the government does not own the Tote. For the time being, only the members of the board are able to dispose of or add to its assets. Labour has always been very supportive of the Tote, and recently helped through both Houses of Parliament legislation enabling the Tote to take bets on Irish lottery numbers and also to offer bets on any event, just as ordinary bookmakers do. This includes bets on the results of the May 1 election.

The Tote now has the greatest bookmaker of them all, Ladbroke, joining Tote Direct. Others are

Why Labour is betting on a loser

following, and by the end of this year it is reasonable to hope that some 6,000 of the country's 8,000 betting shops will have signed on. There is a fine prospect of surging profitability for the Tote, the profits of which go to racing. Jack Straw, the Shadow Home Secretary, understood this and had a row with Gordon Brown. Yesterday, Robin Cook, who knows about racing, said he had pulled down the curtain on the crazy Tote plan. This is a record for Labour summer-saults in 36 hours. I am glad to note that Labour values the Tote at £400-500 million.

The windfall tax has run into difficulties. Millions with small shareholdings or associated with pension funds, which have invested heavily in the privatised utilities, are growing more than somewhat irritated. I have a feeling that this curious tax, of which we are not told the extent, could hit the rocks.

Another possibility for raising money which would not breach Labour's promise on personal income tax is a wealth tax. In August 1974, Denis Healey of "squeeze the rich till the pips squeak" fame, issued Command Paper 5704 from the Treasury. In his foreword he observed: "the bulk of privately owned wealth is still concentrated in relatively few hands. Once the additional taxable capacity represented by ownership of wealth is adequately brought into charge, excessive inequalities of wealth will in time be eroded..."

Denis Healey gave various examples of his proposed tax, starting at 1 per cent a year on anyone with total assets of £100,000 from all sources, rising to 4 per cent for those with £25 million and 5 per cent for having the cheek to own assets of more than £5 million. My friend Lord Holford of United News and Media, like other enormously

wealthy Labour supporters who imagine that Labour is only a tame pussy cat, had better start some tax avoidance schemes.

With the country in increasingly sceptical mood about Europe, the difference between Labour and the Conservatives is growing sharper. Robin Cook has said he looks forward to a majority of socialist parties controlling the EU. He added that he is comfortable with the "social model". This includes the social chapter that Labour, pledged to join, which has devastated industry and commerce on the Continent. The social chapter is the reason why German unemployment is above 12 per cent and still rising while ours is 6.5 per cent and falling. Numerous German firms are moving into Britain, hoping that we will never join the single currency, under which the richer nations will be forced to pay huge subsidies to the poorer. But Mr

Cook has said that if the single currency works for those who join it, it is inevitable that we should, too.

I do not believe Mr Major would ever allow a Conservative government to join the single currency, with all its calamitous consequences. Under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, the EU cannot stop our trade with Europe if we keep the pound intact. The absurdity of cutting Britain off from the continental marketplace would be disastrous for the other EU economies, with which we have an enormous adverse balance.

The Tories' private polls are moving towards a single figure gap between them and Labour, and the present difference between those who identify most with the Tories or most with Labour is now nil. The variation of these figures from those of the large commercial polling organisations is almost certainly due to the atmosphere created by broadcasting and the press, which suggests that it is "politically incorrect" to confess support for Major. In the polling booths it will be a different story. The race is far from finished. I have backed the outsider, John Major, coming up fast, and I do not intend to hedge the bets I have put on him. If I were you, Mrs Blair, I wouldn't start planning new decorations for No 10.

The ideals of a university

Oxford must protect its excellence, but not by narrowing its intake

I suppose the worst thing about being a scholar must be the duty to come to painful conclusions. If fragments of moon-rock turn out on analysis to be green cheese after all, or new and uncontroversial evidence proves that your life's work was a waste of time because we have been reading the Rosetta Stone upside down, then the scholar cannot bury the depressing evidence under mounds of political rhetoric. He has to speak up.

At least, this is the kindest interpretation to put upon the statement by a group of Oxford dons that the university might best preserve its quality by going private. The group, led by Robert Stevens, Master of Pembroke, has written an open letter to the Vice-Chancellor saying that "partial privatisation" by charging course fees is inevitable, and that the university should explore the further step of renouncing government funding.

There will be hissing and hostility, especially from those who despise the grip of Oxbridge on public life. "Typical!" they will say. "They want to be free of the masses and to perpetuate the power of their own sort! They want the kittens of the world's far-east A la guillotine!" They have a point. A few saying Oxford — even leavened by a few bursaries — is a pretty horrible idea. There is no evidence that a supply of brilliant, adventurous 18-year-old minds is best achieved by seeing whose parents happen to have £8,000 to spare, on top of maintenance. Nor is the idea of prolonged loans attractive: all very well for the likes of Nicola Horlick who glide from Balliol to the financial stratosphere, but unfair on those who go into research or teaching. All it would produce is candidates who are either already rich, or determined to get rich quick. Not the Oxford undergraduate sites I best remember: a miner's son, the brilliant if eccentric daughter of a widowed Leicester dinner-lady, and numerous offspring of modestly paid GPs, teachers and first-generation professionals. None of them — none of us, because my father too was a civil servant nearing retirement — would have been there without public support.

But before throwing the idea out, consider why the dons are reluctantly suggesting it. They say that it

could be the only way to save the collegiate and tutorial system. At this point I acknowledge another barrage of angry sneers: why should this archaic and elitist institution think anybody needs its dated systems of teaching? Who gives a damn whether loopy dons are able to continue listening to privileged kiddies reading out their essays in pairs and proposing their jejune arguments before tripping back up historic staircases to panelled rooms, and dining by candlelight in Batman gowns? Can't the little beasts just live in concrete shoe-boxes and take notes in lecture rooms like everybody else?

Because the tutorial and collegiate system is precious, that's why. Yes, it is old-fashioned; no, it does not meet modern business criteria of cost-effectiveness; yes, it will always be a minority luxury. But it is still precious, as a golden reliquary is precious, or a definitive performance of the *Moonlight Sonata*. It is run by human beings

and some of them are charlatans or idlers, yes, but when it works the system is without compare.

As an Oxford or Cambridge undergraduate, you are a member not a customer of your college, which makes you a younger sibling of some of the most distinguished exponents of many subjects. You have easy access to these people. You meet tutors not amid a sea of upturned lecture-room faces, but individually. You haltingly try out your ideas on them, and are slapped down or encouraged, treated kindly or roughly as chance and desert may have it. Pupils are swapped: from my all-women college I was sent out to such major figures as C. L. Wren, Hugo Dyson, Lord David Cecil and John Jones. Friends in other subjects had a similar spread of experience. Some of it was alarming, some nurturing, all stimulating.

Few dons regarded themselves primarily as teachers, and few bothered with kindly sogginess or political correctness. If they thought you were talking rubbish, they said so, even if you were a blushing 17-year-old. Gradually, you learnt to answer back. Sometimes the tutorial hour petered out in lachrymose sherry-drinking: sometimes it ran well over time as we argued intensely about the meaning of a text. I felt part of a



Intensive academic teaching gives students something to aspire to

community of scholars; for quite long periods, indeed, my own degree prospects seemed irrelevant next to the burning interest of the topic in hand.

I thought all universities were like that until friends at more modern foundations explained otherwise. Gradually I realised how eccentric and precious was the system I had experienced. No doubt it has its faults, but it is founded on respect for scholarship, for argument, for the meeting and sparking of minds. And — ironically given the latest proposals — it is the richer because some of those minds come from different backgrounds. It does some things no end of good to be argued with from a fiercely chippy working-class perspective. If Oxford does confine itself to the offspring of the rich, it will lose vital hybrid vigour.

This dilemma is only the tip of a pyramid of unacknowledged difficulty. We have nearly trebled higher education: one in three young people now goes through something called a university. I put it thus because one of the more breathtakingly dishonest things this government has done is blithely to rename a slew of polytechnics and colleges "universities" without doing anything to ensure the standard of their courses.

There was never anything wrong with an honest poly, many provided vocational courses of great rigour and value, up to any university's standards. But the remaining, and the conspiracy of embarrassed silence which now inhibits distinctions between old stone, red brick, white tile, breezeblock and chipboard "universities", has led to a most unscholarly fudge. *The Times* will probably be vilified for asking yesterday: "Can the dons taking a

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tutorial in Aristotelian philosophy at Oxford be directly compared to the lecturer teaching 'gold course management' at the University of the West of England? Angry voices will say that the gold course manager is more economically useful than the philosopher, as if that had anything to do with it. The Education Secretary Mrs Shepherd is particularly fond of making blockish comparisons between landscape gardening and classics degrees, to the detriment of the latter. We are constantly told that the gold reliquary is pointless because a Tupperware box does the job just as well.

Nobody dare challenge this. Political parties are too afraid of the growing middle-class, which wants a "university education" for its kids, and wants it free. So we end up with a ghastly muddle. Only yesterday, London Guildhall University admitted to using a question from a nine-year-old A level paper in its degree exam, and the lecturer who set the module — at South Thames College, which teaches it on a franchise basis — retorted that it was all the students could manage. The Higher Education Quality Council expresses fears that standards are breaking down; Vice-chancellors admit that grades from different universities vary widely. Not being a vice-chancellor, I can be frank and say that some current "degrees" are worthless: soft, waffly subjects, so many modules that you can't fail, "negotiated" assignments you don't have to do, exams that examine nothing much and no contact with any real scholars.

Meanwhile, by stealth, an informal "Ivy League" is forming: the best universities know who they are, and so do employers. And at the tip of the pyramid, Oxford dons wonder about opting out entirely. So innocent 18-year-olds are being conned by a weaselly, embarrassingly British blend of false egalitarianism and secret snobbery. Earlier generations might have had to fight harder for places, but at least they knew what they were signing up for. They did either academic courses, fascinating in themselves, but hard and possibly of no relevance to any career; or vocational courses which gave them a qualification with definite value; or something shorter and less academic at a College of Further Education. The polys and colleges were honourable and useful places; it is their dignity, not that of the old universities, which is degraded by the present charade.

But what politician would dare enrage voters with the idea that perhaps young Johnny should not be a "university graduate" after all?

In training

THE FORMER model Carol Caplin, 35, who embarrassed Labour by showing up with the leader's wife to the 1994 party conference, has skipped back into Cherie Booth's life once again. She is the personal trainer behind her new fitness regime at a north London gym.



Carol, from the waist up

Caplin, who graced the inside pages of the *Daily Star* and once posed semi-naked on the cover of *Men Only*, helped to transform Booth's image after Tony Blair was elected leader in July 1994. But her advice was deemed unnecessary after the media unearthed her modelling past.

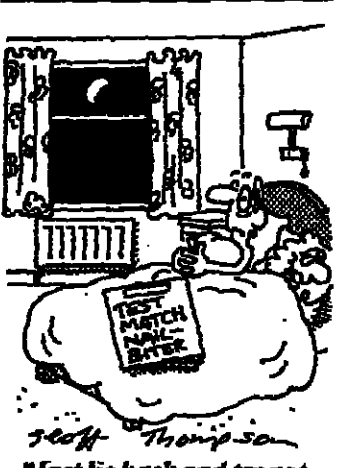
Yet fellow gymnasts at the £588-a-year Albany Fitness Centre in Regent's Park claim that she is now helping out again. "Carol has several clients at the gym including Cherie — who doesn't use anyone else," said one.

"Cherie changes in a private room, then Carol goes through a workout with her. After Cherie has had her shower, Carol then helps with her hair and make-up. The two appear to be great friends," she added. "But they like to come very early, at 7am, to keep things discreet."

Caplin, a former dancer and author who advocates goat's milk and sex for a healthy life, describes herself as a "lifestyle consultant" whose approach is holistic. She

wasn't free to comment yesterday, said the club. "This is a private matter for Cherie Booth."

● Reports that the newly ennobled Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber is selling his £15 million house and his wine cellar because he plans to move to Ireland in the event of a Labour government may be premature. Sir Andrew, who will be gazetted this week as Lord Lloyd-Webber of Symington (his two barrels have to be



Just lie back and try not to think of England



hyphenated in the Upper House), is flat-hunting in London — with £10-£15 million in his pocket.

Carved up

BAD TIDINGS for the four sculptors left competing to design a statue of Duke Ellington for Soho Square. Sir Eduardo Paolozzi has come off the judging panel for the contest and decided to submit his own design. It is rather as though Rostropovich had decided throw his bow into a school cello contest. Peter Boix, chairman of Pizza Express, jazz nut, and organiser of the competition explains: "After receiving the first drawings, Eduardo said he would like to throw his hat

into the ring. I wouldn't want this to put the others off though."

Sleaze quietly

SO assiduous has the disgraced MP Neil Hamilton been in his attempts to prevent sales of *Sleaze*, a book summarising the alleged dealings between Tory MPs and Mohamed Al Fayed, that he has been bounding outlets even before they have opened.

Politico's, a new coffee bar planning to sell political literature when it opens this week, has received a stiff solicitor's letter warning of dire consequences if it stocks the book. "It was delivered by motorcycle courier, which seems a bit over the top," says managing director, Iain Dale. "I do not take kindly to threats of this nature. Had he approached us in a different way, we may have listened."

● A Canadian family whose dog ate \$1,210 (£600) of their savings in notes from a box hidden under the bed followed the golden retriever around with a paper scoop for three days. After a diligent effort — with mother washing and ironing pieces of \$20, \$50 and \$100

bits, and the children taping them together — they were able to deposit \$1,100 in the Hong Kong Bank of Canada.

No six, please

THOSE LUCKY enough to live in the shadow of Lord's Cricket Ground would be advised to wear tin hats when they venture into their gardens this summer. Only the lower tier of the ground's new £13 million Grand Stand will be completed in time for the new season, leaving residents of Cavendish Close, NW6, vulnerable to a bombardment of well-struck sixes.

If legal advice from Jeremy Carver of the international City law firm Clifford Chance is correct the residents are not without means of revenge. "The owners are legally obliged to return the ball," he says, "but only in their own time."

Failing desire

THE DAILY grind of performing in the West End has proved too much for Jessica Lange, the Oscar-winning actress and Urchinpin of Sir Peter Hall's production of *A Street*



Jessica Lange

car Named Desire. Lange took time off after a nasty bout of flu three weeks ago, and has now pulled out of matinee performances on Thursdays. The producers maintain that she is suffering from the after-effects of the virus, but the feeble sprinkling of children and pensioners who show up on damp Thursday afternoons is sufficiently depressing to send any star back to bed.



INNOCENTS ABROAD

Adoption is no place for political correctness

Red tape makes poor swaddling. The Health Secretary's announcement that adoption rules will be relaxed to make it easier for children without families to find families without children is a welcome, but belated, piece of deregulation. As far back as 1993 the then Secretary of State for Health, Virginia Bottomley, argued in a White Paper that children offered for adoption had become hostages of political correctness. Her successor, Stephen Dorrell, deserves two cheers for giving substance to her hopes.

The Government was, apparently, reluctant to act earlier for fear any reform would be overshadowed by arguments over the wisdom of allowing homosexuals to adopt. It is a pity that fear of appearing politically correct in one cause delayed the Government from pruning the PC excesses which already disfigured the adoption process.

The number of British-born children available for adoption has fallen steadily since the Sixties with the wider availability of birth control. Only around 400 were offered last year and there were 20 homes for every child. Given the continual high level of demand and the slow decrease in supply it has become easier for adoption panels to exercise greater selectivity in placing children. The iron law of the market influences even affairs of the heart, but the existence of an unregulated monopoly has meant many deserving parents have been denied.

Decisions in all too many adoption cases have been placed in the hands of social workers who have given more weight to abstract considerations than native wit and commonsense. Social workers are easy Aunt Sallies for Conservative politicians, but in their application of racial criteria for placing children with parents some professionals have turned political correctness into a prejudice every bit as restrictive as those it

was supposed to counteract. While it might be preferable, other things being equal, for a child of one race to be placed with parents from the same background it is rarely the case that other things are equal.

To elevate race above other criteria as the benchmark of suitability is to stray down the cul-de-sac which leads to the ghetto. Complementing the professional experience of social workers on adoption panels with lay members who have experience of adoption, as parent or child, should make for a more balanced approach.

It is not only those children who languish in institutions, however well-run, in this country who would benefit from the chance to be placed with parents. Hundreds of families, anxious to adopt children from abroad, have been thwarted by regulations. Hopeful parents have been set impossible hurdles, including having to learn Mandarin, by functionaries who should learn what it is to be British — tolerant and welcoming to luckless innocents rescued from misfortune.

Children, of course, are not commodities. Advances in fertility treatment and "right to choose" rhetoric have encouraged an approach to children which treats them more as lifestyle accessory and less as divine gift. Parents who are not naturally blessed with children deserve every sympathy but may not always provide suitable homes for adopted children. Nevertheless, there should be a far greater preparedness to place children with couples yearning to adopt. So many children grow up in circumstances where affection is rationed that it is worth neglecting incompatibilities in background to see willing families given the chance to prove themselves. Loving arms are a better guarantee of future happiness for children than matching faces.

HOMES FOR THE BRAVE

Gurkhas deserve the warmest welcome that Britain can offer

The Government announcement yesterday that the Gurkhas serving in Britain will, for the first time, be allowed to bring their families with them is a late but welcome change of heart. It said that 450 married quarters will be provided for the soldiers withdrawn from Hong Kong and rebased in Britain, allowing about 900 wives and children to come here. The announcement is a clear retreat from the tough line taken by the Ministry of Defence last year, which insisted that there was no available accommodation for the one of the most famous and decorated brigades in the British Army. As any military commander knows, tactical retreat is always the best option when the forces ranged on the other side are overwhelming. The pity is only that the Government did not occupy the high ground from the start.

The announcement was part of a general review of the Gurkhas' pay and conditions. The Army and the world were very different when the 1947 Tripartite Agreement, governing the recruitment of Gurkhas, was signed with India. The Gurkhas, whose valour in war has earned them 26 VC's since 1815, were an essential element in the policing of the Empire: a force well able to adapt to tropical heat, terrorist insurgency or Asian conditions. There was little need for them to serve in Britain. Nor was much thought given to their comfort or family life (or indeed to that of any servicemen). Their pay and pensions were pegged to levels in the Indian Army so as not to undermine Indian recruitment. And their reintegration in Nepal on retirement was no concern of the Army.

The Empire has gone, recruitment has fallen and the flag has been hauled down over the Gurkha overseas base in Hong Kong. It is not from mere sentiment, however, that Britain still wants a place in

the Army for these remarkable soldiers. Their morale, motivation and unflinching bravery are as much in need as once was their reputation for ferocity and deadly handling of their kukris. The Army is again having difficulty with recruitment, and with continuing cases of racial bullying, the Gurkhas' prestige and ability to sort out anyone minded to taunt them on grounds of race will do more than any instruction in racial sensitivity.

Gurkhas' motivation, however, has been threatened by increasing anomalies over pay. To conform with the 1947 agreement, basic rates remain low, supplemented by special allowances depending on conditions and location. Over the years these have produced puzzling disparities. The Government has now announced a standard rate, intended to align the income of Gurkhas with the take-home pay of British ranks. There is to be a general rise which will make almost all Gurkhas better off, except those based in Brunel. Such a reform is all the more urgent now that most Gurkhas are serving in Britain, in the same barracks and under the same conditions as Britons.

Providing married quarters — as in Hong Kong — is part of the deal to make conditions for Gurkhas no different from those for any Army recruit. There should never have been any quarrel about this: and ugly suspicions of racial discrimination were allowed to gain currency. What cannot be entertained is equal pension benefits: Gurkhas retiring will live not in Britain but in Nepal, where the cost of living is far lower. After Hong Kong, the Gurkhas may feel cold and uncomfortable in Britain. Yesterday's changes are intended to show that the welcome is as warm here as it was in the last garrison of the Empire.

QUEEN LEAR

The play's the thing wherein to catch a new angle on the king

A woman playing King Lear cracks the last theatrical taboo. This must have happened before, in amateur feminist productions and girls' schools. But Kathryn Hunter, interviewed on our arts pages today, will be the first woman to play Lear professionally. And for this she deserves sympathy as well as cheers. For Lear is the hardest of all the great tragic parts, even for a man. And Ms Hunter is only five feet tall, so she will have to create the majesty of Shakespeare's mad old king with her presence rather than her stature. Her voice is certainly low. But in this part she must forget Lear's recommendation that a woman's voice should be ever soft and gentle as well. For she has to drown the hurricanes and out roar her tigress daughters. But curmudgeon is an epithet applied exclusively to angry old men. The nearest female equivalent, "virago" and "old cow", sound comic not tragic words.

But at least she will play Lear as a man. So there will be no need to edit the script to make Lear roar, "Come not between the shepherd and her wrath", and "You see me here, you gods, a poor old woman." But the tragedy, which runs on the relationship between father and daughters, and heiresses who are both chattels and betrayers of their husbands and lovers, will be given another layer of complexity by a woman as king.

It is not surprising that an actress wants to climb this Everest of tragic roles. After Lady Macbeth, Cleopatra and Voltemba, Shakespeare did not write many good parts for the older woman. And most of those, such as

Juliet's Nurse and Mistress Quickly, are comic supporting roles rather than tragic heroines. There are also precedents for reinterpreting Lear. Nahum Tate's version, with a happy ending in which Lear is restored to his throne, replaced Shakespeare for a century and a half. It is still sometimes revived as a historical curiosity. And Sarah Siddons was the first of many women to act Hamlet. Judith Anderson played him at the age of 73, making Hamlet the eternal student prince, suitably fat and scant of breath. And cross-dressing, with women being mistaken for men, is a key plot in Shakespeare's repertoire. For even Viola alias Cesario and Rosalind as Ganymede were first played by boys acting as girls, dressing up for a spell as boys. Miranda and Isabella, Desdemona and Cordelia herself were all originally played by boys with unbroken voices and beardless chins. So actresses playing the men's parts redress the past, and add new angles and resonances to the infinite variety of the old master.

For King Lear itself is a volcano of pity and terror. It has elements traditionally associated with comedy. A jester comments on the action. The Fool himself was played by Sybil Thorndike in a wartime production. There is a double plot. Disguises thicken that plot. So King Lear is too complex to admit an easy or definitive production. Actors clamber around its peaks and precipices. But a woman as Lear offers a new route to the summit and an interesting new view for her audience from the top.

'Dumbing down' A-level standards

From Mr V. S. Anthony and Dr J. M. Moore

Sir, Your view ("Dumbing down", leading article, February 12) that Mrs Shephard's planned reforms of post-16 education are "a comprehensive failure" will not be shared by those who were closely involved in presenting evidence to Sir Ron Dearing on ways in which improvements could be effected. Our principal objectives were to increase access, to keep up standards and to provide the means for broadening education at this level while ensuring students mastered the basic skills.

The Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference has, for many years, wanted an intermediate examination or an AS level based on the first year of an A-level course. We have not seen this as likely to undermine the standards of A level, though it will enable those who would find a full A-level course beyond them to gain some benefit from further study beyond GCSE.

The key to success is to bring sufficient flexibility to the system under the reforms now proposed. It will remain possible for students to follow a traditional A-level programme while others will be able to offer a mixture of A and AS levels. The universities will have a large say, through entrance requirements, on which of these programmes will prove most popular. Attitudes to the wisdom of accepting the modular approach vary, not least between subjects; but, if linear and modular syllabuses in any subject are to be the same, there will be as many teachers arguing that the modular approach keeps students working effectively throughout the course as there will be those who prefer a holistic end-of-course examination.

While we would have preferred more time to implement them, most of the Shephard/Dearing reforms will be welcomed.

Yours faithfully,
V. S. ANTHONY (Secretary),
J. M. MOORE (Chairman,
Academic Policy Sub-Committee),
The Headmasters' and
Headmistresses' Conference,
130 Regent Road, Leicester.
February 12.

From Mr K. J. Masters

Sir, Your leading article criticises the teaching of modular A levels. Is my last term's work on *Measure for Measure* any less meaningful for being examined when it is still alive and immediate than when it is examined a year later, when I shall have to fan the embers of my students' understanding and enjoyment?

Modules are not an easy way out. They encourage a continuous work-rate over two years of A-level study rather than the frantic last-lap review. A level is, or should be, all about imparting skills, not the cramming and regurgitation of facts.

Yours faithfully,

K. J. MASTERS,
English Department,
Scarlethill Hall School,
Ormskirk, Lancashire.

From Mr Costas P. Kleantous

Sir, Why do we need more than one Examination Board for what are supposed to be national examinations of the same standard?

Yours faithfully,
COSTAS P. KLEANTOUS,
Thatchways,
Bride Lane, Loudwater,
Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire.

Independence party

From Dr Richard North

Sir, Before claiming that the UK Independence Party (UKIP) provides me with an emotionally satisfying political home, Michael Gove ("Time to pack up, Sir James", February 10) might have asked me why I joined the party and am standing in the Wirral South by-election. I found that the UKIP, uniquely amongst our political parties, offered an intellectually consistent message, which made it attractive as a political home.

As to the "simple platform" to which he refers, I, in common with some 300 UKIP prospective parliamentary candidates, stand on the "twin track" platform of immediate withdrawal from the EU and the reconstruction of parliamentary democracy in the UK. This platform is far from simple, and involves, *inter alia*, the complex and intellectually stimulating process of creating policies which will enable the UK to forge ahead as a prosperous, independent nation, once it is released from the shackles of the Byzantine empire which is the EU.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD NORTH,
Croft Mill, Sharp Street,
Wibsey, Bradford, West Yorkshire.

Second time around

From Commander R. S. Stevenson RN (ret'd)

Sir, Surely the idea of renewing a vow which has been made "till death do us part" (report, February 8) is superfluous and only serves to devalue the original pledge.

Yours sincerely,
RONALD STEVENSON,
Ling Garth, Low Row,
Richmond, North Yorkshire.
February 9.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9KN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Justice in mandatory sentences

From Lord Derwent

Sir, Perhaps I may explain why some of us who in principle greatly dislike the idea of mandatory minimum sentences (letters, February 3, 5, 11) nevertheless supported the Government in the House of Lords on February 13 on this issue.

The maximum sentence for burglary is 14 years' imprisonment. As was pointed out in yesterday's debate by Lady Blatch, Minister of State at the Home Office, 4,400 people were sentenced for domestic burglary in the Crown Courts in 1995. Of these only 179 were sentenced to more than three years and only 14 to more than five years.

In other words, Parliament's decision that the range of sentencing should be up to 14 years has been replaced by the judges imposing their own range of up to three years in most cases. There are many examples of this belief by the judges that their view is to be preferred to that of Parliament.

If the judges are outraged at any limitation on their discretion it must also be said that many members of the public are equally outraged by the way this discretion has been exercised in recent years.

Yours faithfully,

DERWENT,
House of Lords,
February 14.

From His Honour Joseph Dean

Sir, With all respect to Lord Donaldson of Lynton (letter, February 5) and Mr Robert Milson (February 11) "the right to drive a motor vehicle" is not "a privilege". It derives from the ancient, common law right to come and go along the public highway.

The exercise of that right is regulated by the Road Traffic Acts. Similarly the right to personal liberty is subject to the criminal law and Criminal Justice Acts. Disqualification from driving involves the "curtailment" of a right, as of course does a sentence of imprisonment.

In reply to Mr Ian Cook (letter, February 11), while the Road Traffic Act 1988 does indeed contain a discretionary exemption for "special reasons" from the mandatory disqualification, these words have been interpreted by the Court of Appeal so as to exclude any question of hardship on the driver or his family.

Bloody Sunday inquiry

From Mr Desmond J. Keenan

Sir, Many voices on the nationalist side are asking for a new inquiry into the so-called "Bloody Sunday" killings of January 30, 1972 (letters, February 3, 5). Are they looking for a genuine inquiry or are they looking for a witchhunt?

The Widgery report, published in the following April, concluded that the soldiers fired after having been fired on, or thought they were being fired on. This was and is the most reasonable explanation. Yet it is rejected by the nationalists *a priori* for two reasons. The first is that it is incompatible with the mythology of Irish nationalism, which insists that the guilty British always attack the innocent Irish without cause. The other is that if a republican fired the first shot he is responsible for the deaths, which is

Hospital nutrition

From Professor Emeritus J. E. Lennard-Jones

Sir, Doctors and nurses do indeed work hard for patients, but nutrition tends to be neglected because food is regarded as part of routine care and not as an important aspect of treatment (Medical briefing, February 4; see also report, February 3).

Malnutrition is a complication of serious illness and not its inevitable consequence. Loss of more than 10 per cent of body weight leads to loss of muscle strength, fatigue, apathy, depression, immobility and reduced resistance to infection. Florence Nightingale recognised that starvation is possible in the midst of plenty; current concern shows that this is still true. A positive approach to nutrition as treatment needs acceptance, as emphasised in a report published in January 1992 by the King's Fund Centre.

Doctors and nurses often do not recognise undernutrition because they are not trained to look for it and do not recognise the benefits of treating it. In

Art in action

From Mr Roy Knowles

Sir, I am in awe of Yukinori Yanagi's perseverance and resilience against boredom during his six days of tracking ants with a pen (report, February 13). The Chisenhale Gallery may be interested in my dining-room carpet. It bears a muddy trail of footprints, left by my dog in person, thereby freeing the middleman for alternative recreation.

The carpet could be said to symbolise the frailty of social controls between cohabiting species, and may thus be suitable for exhibiting as the antithesis of Mr Yanagi's symbolism of "social controls in society".

Yours sincerely,
ROY KNOWLES,
15 Chapel Lane, Cronon,
Widnes, Cheshire.
February 14.

New staff college to be 'envy of all'

From Brigadier Charles McBean (ret'd)

Sir, Contrary to the opinions expressed by Field Marshal Stanier (letter, February 10) the decision to locate the new Joint Staff College at Shrivenham in Oxfordshire is one of the most significant decisions of the post-Cold War era and one which is to be warmly applauded. It has a boldness and imagination worthy of our greatest military commanders.

By concentrating the expertise of all three staff colleges on the site of the existing Royal Military College of Sciences (where half of Army staff training already takes place), it will create a unique and unrivalled concentration of military knowledge and expertise. Not only does the decision accord with one of the fundamental principles of war, namely the concentration of force, it will also provide the opportunity to create a world-class institution which will be the envy of all.

The staff college building at Camberley is no "treasure". Although outwardly imposing, it has little architectural merit and the instructional accommodation is more "sink school" than staff college. It cannot accommodate students of all three Services.

Far from feeling unloved, I suspect that the majority of our officers and those who instruct them will be honoured by such a considerable investment in their professional education and advancement.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES McBEAN,
Cavalry and Guards Club,
127 Piccadilly, W1.
February 11.

From Professor Lawrence Freedman

Sir, I can reassure Mr John Parfitt (letter, February 10) that academic criticism from King's College London for the new Joint Staff College will not simply arrive via the 9am from Paddington. A dedicated department of experienced staff will be based at the college.

The Department of War Studies has been involved closely in military education for a number of years, and has run a highly-regarded MA for the individual Service staff colleges. Officers have been given access to top experts in all areas of international relations and defence studies from a department that recently obtained the highest rating (five-star) in the Higher Education Funding Council's research assessment exercise.

In addition, the teaching at both the interim and final versions of the staff college will depend to a great extent on staff from the Department of History and International Affairs at Greenwich. We have a long association with this department, going back to Sir John Laughton who taught at both Greenwich and King's at the turn of the century, and the working relationship continues to be extremely close.

Yours sincerely,
LAWRENCE FREEDMAN,
King's College London,
Department of War Studies,
Strand, WC2.
February 10.

Surname usage

From the Director of Music at King's College, Cambridge

Sir, Some years ago, on a choir tour in the USA, my wife, travelling as assistant mistress, was asked by a young chorister: "Mrs Cleobury, why do you call us by our Christian names, while Mr Cleobury uses our surnames?"

I changed my unmodified practice (letters, February 8) there and then and have not regretted it until this year, when the presence of no fewer than six Edwards in the choir has caused some practical problems.

Any Edwards applying for our forthcoming auditions should be assured, however, that they will suffer no discrimination.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN CLEOBURY,
King's College, Cambridge,
February 12.

From Mr Richard Scrivener

Sir, Mr G. A. A. Scriven (letter, February 8) questions the prevalence of certain "colour" surnames and the absence of others.

English surnames are broadly derivative of past occupation or office — as is his own, and indeed mine — personal description or place of origin. Hence Black and Brown signify complexion or hair colour, while Green denotes a dweller by that place.

He may care to consider several surnames I have encountered — Eighteen, Gooch and Puddinglat.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD SCRIVENER,
St Marks,
Buttsway, Milverton, Somerset.

Till later?

From Mr Robert Tucker

Sir, Sign displayed at an attended but closed customer service position, spotted whilst queuing recently at a building society in the City: "Cashier balancing".

Is this the banking equivalent of leaves on the track?

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT D. TUCKER,
Rubicon, off Howards Lane,
Rowtown, Surrey.
February 14.

Business letters, page 29

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.

THE TIMES TUESDAY FEBRUARY 18 1997

The ITF players, their points and their values if you are considering the transfer option



Asanovic scores from the penalty spot to maintain his status as one of ITF's most valuable midfield players

Code	Name	Team	Em	Wk	Ch
42608	P Tisdale	Southampton	0.50	0	0
42609	M Robinson	Southampton	0.25	0	+6
42610	G Potter	Southampton	0.50	0	+2
42611	E Berkovic	Sunderland	1.00	0	+19
42701	M Gray	Sunderland	1.50	0	+18
42702	S Agnew	Sunderland	1.50	0	+11
42703	A Rhee	Sunderland	0.75	0	+32
42704	P Bracewell	Sunderland	1.00	0	+8
42705	M Smith	Sunderland	5.00	+2	+10
42801	D Anderson	Tottenham Hotspur	4.00	0	+23
42802	R Fox	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00	0	+21
42803	D Howells	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00	0	+2
42804	J Doozelle	Tottenham Hotspur	1.50	0	+32
42805	A Sinton	Tottenham Hotspur	1.50	0	+3
42806	R Rosenthal	Tottenham Hotspur	2.50	0	+31
42809	A Nielsen	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00	+1	+26
42902	I Bishop	West Ham United	2.00	0	+34
42903	M Hughes	West Ham United	1.50	0	+17
42904	D Williamson	West Ham United	1.50	0	+15
42905	S Lazaridis	West Ham United	0.25	0	+11
42907	R Earle	Wimbledon	4.00	+3	+51
43002	O Leonhardsen	Wimbledon	2.50	+1	+36
43003	M Gayle	Wimbledon	1.50	0	+28
43004	V Jones	Wimbledon	0.50	0	+37
43005	N Ardley	Wimbledon	0.50	0	0
43006	S Castledine	Wimbledon	0.25	0	+1
43007	P Fear	Wimbledon			

Code	Name	Team	Em	Wk	Ch
50101	S Booth	Aberdeen	4.50	+1	+9
50102	D Shearer	Aberdeen	5.00	+1	+32
50103	W Doozelle	Aberdeen	7.00	+1	+54
50201	I Wright	Arsenal	7.00	+1	+27
50202	J Harrison	Arsenal	0.50	0	0
50203	K Kwomaya	Arsenal	7.50	0	+56
50301	D York	Aston Villa	5.00	0	+29
50302	S Milosavljevic	Aston Villa	4.00	0	+14
50303	T Johnson	Aston Villa	2.00	0	+8
50401	J Joachim	Aston Villa	2.00	0	+4
50402	K Gallacher	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	0	+37
50403	C Sutton	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	+3
50404	G Fenton	Blackburn Rovers	1.00	0	0
50405	N Gudmundsson	Blackburn Rovers	7.00	0	+43
50501	P van Hool	Blackburn Rovers	6.00	0	+65
50502	I Cadzow	Blackburn Rovers	5.00	0	+32
50601	G Vialli	Chelsea	5.00	0	+32
50602	M Hughes	Chelsea	0.50	0	0
50603	M Stein	Chelsea	5.00	+1	+29
50604	G Zola	Chelsea	6.00	+1	+27
50701	N Whelan	Coventry City	5.00	0	+26
50702	D Taylor	Coventry City	3.00	0	+3
50703	P Ndlovu	Coventry City	0.50	0	+32
50801	D Huckerby	Derby County	2.00	0	+7
50802	M Gabbadoni	Derby County	2.00	0	+18
50803	A Ward	Derby County	1.00	0	+17
50804	R Williams	Derby County	3.00	+1	+3
50903	K Olofinboba	Dundee United	2.00	0	+12
51002	S Petrie	Dundee United	2.00	0	+32
51101	D Ferguson	Everton	4.00	0	+35
51102	N Barry	Everton	3.00	0	+30
51103	G Stuart	Everton	2.00	0	+3
51104	P Riechardt	Everton	1.50	0	+7
51105	M Roberts	Everton	3.50	0	+44
51201	J Robertson	Hearts	3.50	0	+43
51202	C Cameron	Hearts	3.00	0	+16
51203	D Beckett	Hearts	3.00	0	+39
51301	K Wright	Hibernian	3.00	0	+30
51302	D Jackson	Hibernian	3.00	0	+30
51401	P Wright	Leeds United	7.00	0	0
51501	A Beash	Leeds United	3.50	0	+26
51502	I Rush	Leeds United	2.50	0	+37
51503	B Deane	Leeds United	2.00	0	+17
51601	S Clatridge	Leeds United	2.50	0	+32
51602	E Heskey	Leeds United	0.75	+1	+2
51603	M Robins	Leeds United	0.75	+1	+23
51604	I Marshall	Leeds United	9.00	0	+50
51701	R Fowler	Liverpool	8.00	0	+39
51702	E Cantona	Liverpool	8.50	0	+36
51801	E Cantona	Manchester United	5.00	0	+6
51802	P Scholes	Manchester United	3.00	0	+38
51803	A Cole	Manchester United	5.00	+1	+50
51804	O G Solskjaer	Manchester United	2.50	0	+17
51905	P Pavlenko	Middlesbrough	2.00	+1	+32
51906	T Coyne	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	+17
52002	D Arnott	Middlesbrough	1.00	0	+69
52003	A Shearer	Newcastle United	8.50	0	+46
52101	L Ferdinand	Newcastle United	6.50	0	+8
52102	F Asprilla	Newcastle United	5.00	0	+29
52103	P Bardsley	Nottingham Forest	3.50	0	+132
52202	B Roy	Nottingham Forest	3.00	0	+10
52203	P McGregor	Nottingham Forest	1.50	0	+133
52204	K Campbell	Nottingham Forest	1.50	0	+7
52205	J Lee	Nottingham Forest	0.50	0	0
52206	A Silenzi	Nottingham Forest	0.50	0	+1
52301	P Duffield	Raith Rovers	2.00	0	+18
52401	G Durie	Rangers	5.00	0	+35
52402	E Anderson	Rangers	5.00	0	+36
52403	A McColl	Rangers	6.00	0	0
52404	van Vossen	Rangers	4.00	0	+3
52405	M Bristow	Sheffield Wednesday	3.00	0	+12
52501	D Hirst	Sheffield Wednesday	2.50	0	+29
52502	A Booth	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0	+29
52503	G Whittingham	Sheffield Wednesday	0.50	0	0
52504	O Donaldson	Sheffield Wednesday	2.00	0	+15
52505	R Humphreys	Sheffield Wednesday	7.00	0	+31
52601	M Tiesie	Southampton	2.00	0	+34
52602	E Osenstad	Southampton	1.00	0	+5
52701	P Stewart	Sunderland	2.00	0	+18
52702	C Russell	Sunderland	1.00	0	+18
52703	D Kelly	Sunderland	0.50	0	+2
52704	L Howey	Sunderland	0.50	0	+12
52801	N Quinn	Sunderland	3.00	0	+7
52802	E Sheringham	Tottenham Hotspur	8.00	0	+19
52803	C Armstrong	Tottenham Hotspur	0.75	0	+5
52804	R Allen	Tottenham Hotspur	3.50	0	+14
52901	S Jensen	Tottenham Hotspur	2.00	0	+13
52902	P Kibson	West Ham United	1.50	0	+12
52903	S Jones	West Ham United	3.00	0	+12
53001	E Holdsworth	Wimbledon	3.00	0	+14
53002	E Eklou	Wimbledon	1.50	0	+14
53003	J Goodman	Wimbledon	0.75	0	0
53004	E Eklou	Wimbledon	0.75	0	0
53005	A Clarke	Wimbledon	0.50	0	0
53006	M Harford	Wimbledon			

Code	Name	Team	Em	Wk	Ch
60101	R Aitken	Aberdeen	2.50	+1	+26
60202	A Wenger	Arsenal	3.50	0	+34
60301	B Little	Aston Villa	3.00	0	+15
60402	A Parkes	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	0	+15
60501	T Burns	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	+54
60601	R Gullit	Chelsea	4.00	0	+31
60702	G Strachan	Coventry City	1.75	0	+35
60801	J Smith	Derby County	0.75	0	+12
62302	T McLean	Dundee United	0.50	0	+12
61101	W Paton	Everton	3.00	0	+23
61102	J Royle	Hearts	2.00	0	+23
61201	J Jeffries	Hibernian	1.00	0	+4
61302	J Duffy	Leeds United	2.00	0	+12
61502	G Graham	Leeds United	0.50	0	+12
61601	R Evans	Liverpool	4.50	0	+50
61801	A McLeish	Manchester United	2.00	0	+31
61901	B Robson	Middlesbrough	2.00	0	+15
62001	A McLeish	Middlesbrough	4.50	0	+5
62102	K Delglish	Newcastle United	2.00	0	-1
62202	S Pearce	Nottingham Forest	0.50	0	+12
62303	I Munro	Rangers	5.00	0	+35
62401	W Smith	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0	+39
62501	D Plett	Southampton	0.50	0	+6
62701	P Field	Sunderland	0.50	0	+19
62801	G Francis	Tottenham Hotspur	3.00	0	+12
62901	H Redknapp	West Ham United	2.00	0	+9
63001	J Kinnear	Wimbledon	1.00	0	+34

Code	Name	Team	Em	Wk	Ch
60101	R Aitken	Aberdeen	2.50	+1	+26
60202	A Wenger	Arsenal	3.50	0	+34
60301	B Little	Aston Villa	3.00	0	+15
60402	A Parkes	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	0	+15
60501	T Burns	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	+54
60601	R Gullit	Chelsea	4.00	0	+31
60702	G Strachan	Coventry City	1.75	0	+35
60801	J Smith	Derby County	0.75	0	+12
62302	T McLean	Dundee United	0.50	0	+12
61101	W Paton	Everton	3.00	0	+23
61102	J Royle	Hearts	2.00	0	+23
61201	J Jeffries	Hibernian	1.00	0	+4
61302	J Duffy	Leeds United	2.00	0	+12
61502	G Graham	Leeds United	0.50	0	+12
61601	R Evans	Liverpool	4.50	0	+50
61801	A McLeish	Manchester United	2.00	0	+31
61901	B Robson	Middlesbrough	2.00	0	+15
62001	A McLeish	Middlesbrough	4.50	0	+5
62102	K Delglish	Newcastle United	2.00	0	-1
62202	S Pearce	Nottingham Forest	0.50	0	+12
62303	I Munro	Rangers	5.00	0	+35
62401	W Smith	Sheffield Wednesday	1.50	0	+39
62501	D Plett	Southampton	0.50	0	+6
62701	P Field	Sunderland	0.50	0	+19
62801	G Francis	Tottenham Hotspur	3.00	0	+12
62901	H Redknapp	West Ham United	2.00	0	+9
63001	J Kinnear	Wimbledon	1.00	0	+34

Code	Name	Team	Em	Wk	Ch
60101	R Aitken	Aberdeen	2.50	+1	+26
60202	A Wenger	Arsenal	3.50	0	+34
60301	B Little	Aston Villa	3.00	0	+15
60402	A Parkes	Blackburn Rovers	3.00	0	+15
60501	T Burns	Blackburn Rovers	2.50	0	+54
60601	R Gullit	Chelsea	4.00	0	+31
60702	G Strachan	Coventry City	1.75	0	+35
60801	J Smith	Derby County	0.75	0	+12
62302	T McLean	Dundee United	0.50	0	+12
61101	W Paton	Everton	3.00	0	+23
61102	J Royle	Hearts	2.00	0	+23
61201	J Jeffries	Hibernian	1.00	0	+4
61302	J Duffy	Leeds United	2.00	0	+12
61502	G Graham	Leeds United	0.50	0	+12
61601	R Evans	Liverpool	4.50	0	+50
61801	A McLeish	Manchester United	2.00	0	+31
61901	B Robson	Middlesbrough	2.00	0	+15
62001	A McLeish	Middlesbrough	4.50	0	+5
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62901	H Redknapp	West Ham United	2.00	0	+9
63001	J Kinnear	Wimbledon	1.00	0	+34

مركزا من راحل

NEWS

Labour U-turn on Tote privatisation

Labour performed a remarkable U-turn last night when Robin Cook insisted that his party would not privatise the Tote. Only 36 hours earlier, a spokesman for Gordon Brown had floated the idea of selling the pool betting organisation for up to £500 million.

The privatisation plan, supposedly discussed by Labour frontbenchers, had the party's senior figures in turmoil all day. In the end it was left to the Shadow Foreign Secretary to sort out the muddle. Page 1

Bosnia orphan can stay in Britain

A girl aged four, orphaned in Bosnia's civil war, may stay with her British foster parents even though they were guilty of "appalling irresponsibility" in adopting her, a High Court judge ruled. Page 1

Commons battle

The Ulster Unionists bargained across the floor of the Commons as Douglas Hogg fought to head off an attempt to sack him and force a vote of confidence aimed at bringing down the Government. Page 1

Dickens statue

Charles Dickens is to be honoured with a statue, despite a clearly stated intention in his will that he did not want one. Page 1

Exam outrage

An examination board provoked outrage among Classics teachers yesterday after imposing an extra £15 charge on every Latin and Greek A-level student. Page 1

Victim was afraid

Billie-Jo Jenkins, 13, who was bludgeoned to death in the garden of her home, feared she was being stalked and had received anonymous calls. Page 3

Adoption hope

Childless couples hoping to adopt babies from abroad will be the main winners from Stephen Dorrell's pledge to eradicate "political correctness" from adoption. Page 4

Gurkha victory

Gurkha soldiers withdrawn from Hong Kong will be allowed to have their families in Britain, where they are now based, Nicholas Soames, Armed Forces Minister, confirmed. Page 5

'Keats off the grass' signs for park

Quotations from Keats are to be used to fight vandalism at Jubilee Park, Spennymoor, Co Durham. Placards bearing such pearls as "A thing of beauty is a joy forever", and "Leave nothing but footprints", will replace ones saying "Keep off the grass", "No dog fouling" and "Do not steal the flowers". Closed circuit television will still be used. Page 4

Asylum ruling

Asylum-seekers who are disallowed state benefits must still be given food and shelter by local authorities, the Court of Appeal ruled. Page 6

Special equation

The forerunner to the personal computer has been rebuilt as an anniversary tribute to Tom Kilburn, 76, who in 1948 beat the Americans to make Manchester the computer's birthplace. Page 8

Motorway toll

Drivers face having to pay to use motorways by early next century after the development of "ray-gun" electronic tolling technology. Every car would have a dashboard meter costing £20 to £30. Page 11

US-German rift

Germany and America crossed swords over western policy towards Iran and Bonn's treatment of scientists during a visit by Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State. Page 12

Beijing recall

Speculation grew over the health of Deng Xiaoping, 93, China's senior ruler, after leaders were recalled to Beijing. Page 13

China 'spying'

American intelligence is said to have identified nearly 1,000 companies in the US being used by the Chinese for spying or to acquire technology. Page 14



Commander Anthony Morrow aboard the Royal yacht Britannia, greets Qatari leaders yesterday at a business summit in Doha

Copper losses: Yasuo Hamanaka, the former copper trader, told a Tokyo court that he alone was responsible for unauthorised deals that resulted in massive losses for Sumitomo Corporation. Page 25

Gas falls: Shares in Centrica, the demerged gas supply arm of British Gas, fell 10p to 654p in the first day's dealings. Page 25

Casinos: London Clubs, the casino group, is bidding £181 million for Capital Corporation, owner of the Crockfords and Colony Club casinos. Page 25

Markets: The FT-SE 100 Index fell 3.2 points to close at 4337.8. Sterling's trade-weighted index rose from 97.7 to 98.0 after a fall from \$1.6213 to \$1.6167 but a rise from DM2.7348 to DM2.7473. Page 28

Rugby union: All of England's three-quarters who took part in the record win over Ireland have been omitted from the preliminary squad for the British Isles tour to South Africa. Page 48

Cricket: England were pursuing a fourth-innings target of 305 in the final Test against New Zealand. Only once, 68 years ago, have they scored more than 300 to win a Test. Page 46

Football: Leicester City are to hold an inquiry into crowd trouble at the FA Cup fifth-round tie against Chelsea, where 40 people were ejected and ten arrested. Page 48

Rugby league: Eric Hughes was appointed coach of Wigan in succession to Graeme West, who left the club after 15 years. Page 45

Queen Lear: Kathryn Hunter is five feet tall and thirty-something. This does not deter her from tackling the lead of the octogenarian father in *King Lear*. Page 34

Quick change: The German artist Lovis Corinth defies categorisation, which partly explains his low profile in Britain. A Tate retrospective will change that. Page 35

Victorian values: Washington's National Gallery is displaying more than 60 Victorian paintings at a time when America is congratulating itself on a return to hard work and self reliance. Page 35

Comic opera: Graham Vick's staging of *Figaro's Wedding* is back at the Coliseum and romps along as brightly and sharply as when it was new in 1991. Page 36

Terror dreams: Nightmares happen to people who fail to acknowledge that they are also evil, says Fay Weldon. Page 17

Real he-woman: Applies to the female equivalent of male chauvinists, who feel threatened by other women. Page 17

Good health, part two: How to spring-clean our systems and boost our energy levels by eating the right natural foods. Page 16

House of horrors: The civil case of a couple whose home was damaged by a demolition crane nine years ago. Page 37

What a pay-off: American courts are wondering if contingency fee lawyers are worth the money they charge. Page 39

Getting the message: Communicating with your customer is the best path to business success.

Is the great dream of Maastricht dying in Germany? It is tempting to indulge in Schadenfreude over Germany's rising public debt and growing unemployment. But we should be careful: there is a risk that these tensions will encourage reactionary and xenophobic forces in Germany. — La Repubblica

Preview: A drug addict tries to break the habit of more than 20 years. *Inside Story* (BBC1, 10pm). Review: Peter Barnard on a drama chronologically adrift. Page 51

Innocents abroad

It is worth neglecting incompatibilities in background to see willing families given the chance to prove themselves. Loving arms are a better guarantee of future happiness than matching faces. Page 19

Homes for the brave

Providing married quarters is part of the deal to make conditions for Gurkhas no different from those for any Army recruit. There should never have been any quarrel about this. Page 19

Queen Lear

Curmudgeon is an epithet applied exclusively to angry old men. The nearest female equivalent, "vira-go" and "old cow", sound comic, not tragic, words. Page 19

LIBBY PURVES

There was never anything wrong with an honest pity. But the re-naming, and the conspiracy of embarrassed silence which now inhibits distinctions between old stone, red brick, white tile breeze-block and chipboard "universities", has led to a most unsatisfactory judge. Page 18

WOODROW WYATT

I do not believe Mr Major would ever allow a Conservative government to join the single currency, with all its calamitous consequences. Page 48

PETER RIDDELL

Yesterday's debate on BSE was a sideshow, a diversion, a distraction, providing an opportunity for Labour to highlight a weak issue for the Tories and for the Ulster Unionists to play their favourite game of squeezing a vulnerable government. It was the politics of the bazaar. Page 20

Raymond Coxon, artist: Sir John Wordie, former chairman of Burnham Committee: Major Archie Jack, saboteur. Page 21

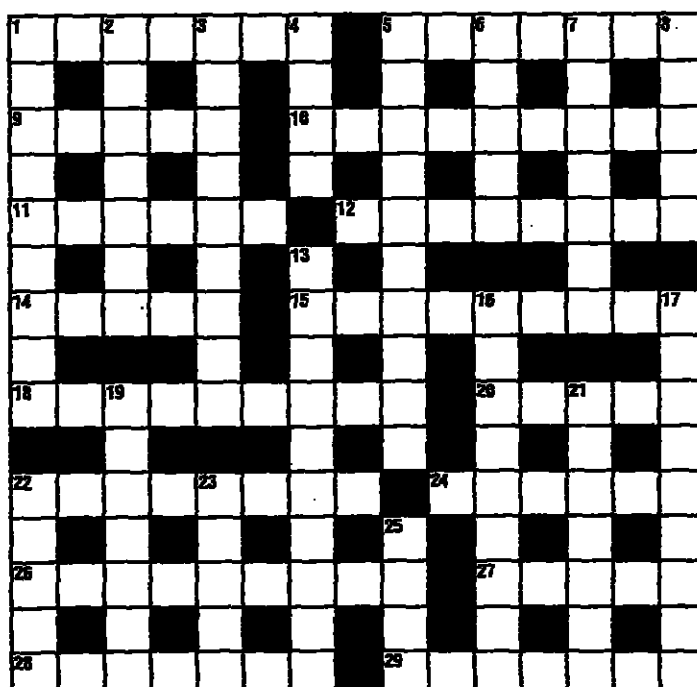
A-level standards: justice in mandatory sentences: bloody Sunday inquiry: surnames. Page 19

IN THE TIMES

STYLE
Why the up and coming designers Clements Ribeiro are high-street bound

INTERFACE
Win one of three multimedia PCs each worth £2,500 with the weekly technology guide

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,406



- ACROSS
- Garland for head man a restraint (7).
 - Run and pass to slip back (7).
 - Scare when armed assailant loses head (5).
 - Tea brewed with care if taken in this restaurant? (9).
 - One's getting married, adhering to article of faith (6).
 - Column heading out of fortified position after engagement (4-4).
 - Large number employed by a plant (5).
 - Bags of old laws covering backsliding for instance (9).
 - An old pigeon, not a carrier? (9).
 - Difficult question - or a sifter (5).
 - Going downhill, powerless to align front of ski in finish (8).
 - Operation at home following doctor's visit (4,2).
- Solution to Puzzle No 20,405
- STICKITONESGUNSE
HSEWNE
INTERVIEWINDIC
GREASEPRESERVE
EMPLOYCOMPLINE
AUPLE
CONVENIENTDEED
LTAPE
ADVERTISEBUNKUM
SEEHPSYE
SHIRENEIGHBOUR
ISCUETI
COMEHOMETOROSIT
- 26 Backing tip in taste for flutter (9).
27 Right to have cast out broken pottery (5).
28 Send out carpet with reverse backing included (7).
29 Check metal in compass pointing wrong way (7).
- DOWN
- Love, in short, requires craft in wooing (9).
 - Circling for miles, as lacking a fixed course (7).
 - Ascend alp in order to see this? (9).
 - Gender food (4).
 - Stubborn Italian monk entering religious house (10).
 - Euro-currency that finally gets introduced in volume (5).
 - Incomplete on one side (7).
 - Duck's bill for penetrating always short (5).
 - Wrapping concealing apparatus used for robbery (10).
 - Deck for display crossing bay, perhaps (9).
 - Lover of the night air (9).
 - Showed teeth enmeshed (7).
 - Wise old man's upbringing that's based on scriptures (7).
 - Monarch crowned in spring (5).
 - Wild animal heard in Siberian forest (5).
 - Consider reward, having been put up for it (4).

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HIGHEST & LOWEST
Yesterday: Highest day temp: Sahlgren, Co. Londonderry, 12C (54F); lowest day max: Inverness, 7C (45F); highest rainfall: Shet, Dumfries, 3.6in; highest snowfall: Looe, Suffolk, 1.2in

NEWSPAPERS
RECYCLING
Recycled paper made up
of 10% of the paper material for
UK newspapers in the first
half of 1996

HEALTH SAFETY NET
You must want other important
things in your life. Why not your
health? WPA's range of good value,
high service health schemes
are all detailed on the Internet.
http://www.wpahealth.com

WPA
Western Provident Association
http://www.wpahealth.com

General: Overcast wet weather in England and Wales will clear to the east during the morning. By afternoon most places will be brighter with showers, frequent and heavy in the west, including sleet in Snowdonia, fewer in the east. Winds will be strong and gusty with gales in places.

Scotland and Northern Ireland will experience strong, gusty winds and frequent showers, especially in the west. The showers will fall as snow in places, drifting in the hills in the southwest gales.

London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E Midlands, E England, W Midlands, Central N: Cloudy, rain becoming persistent, heavy for a time. Becoming brighter by midday with showers and sunny intervals in afternoon. Winds strong, locally gale, south or southwest. Cold. Max 10C (50F).

Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales, N Wales, NW England: Heavy rain clearing after daybreak. Becoming brighter with frequent, often heavy, squally showers. Winds gusty, strong to gale, southwest. Cold. Max 9C (48F).

Lake District, Isle of Man, SW Scotland, Glasgow, Central Highlands, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Argyll, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland, N Ireland: Frequent squally showers, heavy and prolonged at times. Snow, drifting on hills. Winds strong to gale, locally severe gale, south-west. Cold. Max 7C (45F).

NE England, Borders, Edinburgh and Dundee, Aberdeen: Bright or sunny intervals and heavy showers, blustery at times. Snow on hills. Cold. Max 8C (46F).

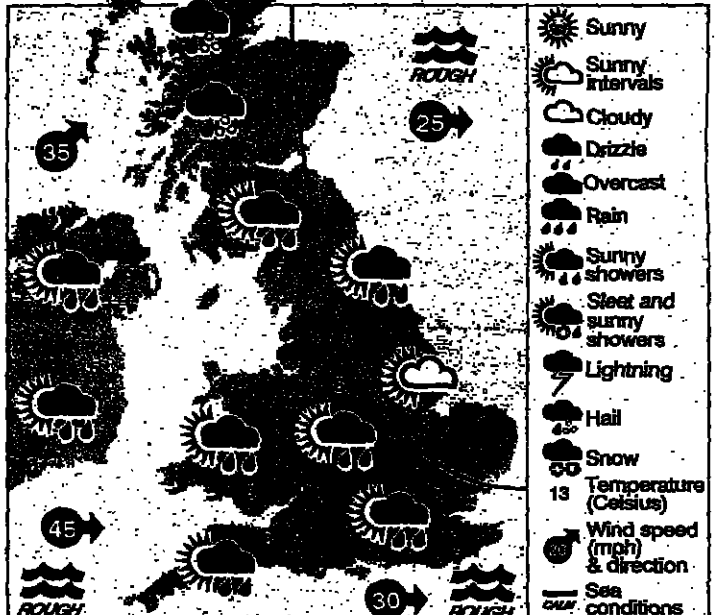
Outlook: Clear overnight into Wednesday, then further rain from west.

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Outlook: Clear overnight into Wednesday, then further rain from west.



Low K will track east across Scandinavia and fill; low C will edge across Ireland and gradually fill; low E will move northeast and deepen



TODAY AM HT PM HT TODAY AM HT PM HT
London Bridge 11.00 6.1 23.40 6.3
Aberdeen 04.05 10.4 18.45 10.6
Belfast 08.15 3.2 20.56 3.1
Cardiff 03.51 8.8 16.31 10.1
Dundee 02.45 4.5 15.24 4.5
Dunfermline 02.22 5.5 20.51 5.7
Edinburgh 02.17 4.2 14.52 4.3
Glasgow 03.42 2.9 22.43 2.8
Hull 03.04 5.3 17.53 5.3
Leeds 02.02 4.8 20.30 4.7
Liverpool 03.29 7.2 18.00 7.5
Manchester 03.10 7.3 15.42 7.5
Newcastle 03.42 5.2 16.06 5.4
Preston 03.42 5.2 16.06 5.4
Sheffield 03.42 5.2 16.06 5.4
Southampton 03.42 5.2 16.06 5.4
Tottenham 03.42 5.2 16.06 5.4
Wolverhampton 03.42 5.2 16.06 5.4
Wrexham 03.42 5.2 16.06 5.4

Full moon February 28

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Private
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of Gas

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TODAY



ENTERPRISE

From ducking and diving to million pound turnovers
PAGE 30



ARTS

The woman who would be King — Lear, that is
PAGES 34-36



SPORT

Rusdski's finest hour ruined by wrist injury
PAGES 43-48

TELEVISION
AND
RADIO
PAGES
46, 47

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 18 1997

Panorama alleges exchange knew copper price was being artificially inflated

LME accused over Hamanaka



David King: programme says he misled markets

BY JASON NISSE

DAVID KING, chief executive of the London Metals Exchange, was accused last night of misleading the copper markets over the massive positions built up by Yasuo Hamanaka that cost Sumitomo Corporation \$2.6 billion.

The LME, whose chairman, Lord Bagri, was ennobled in the New Year Honours List, knew months before the market crashed that Hamanaka was artificially inflating the price of copper. However, speaking on last night's BBC Panorama programme, "The Copper Ring", Mr King said the LME could not reveal what it knew because it would have been "a major distortion of the market".

Neal Wolkoff, executive vice-president of Nymex, the New York Mercantile Exchange, the US's largest copper market, accused Mr King of misleading the markets by saying, in public, that the high copper price was "due to good, sound, fundamental economics". These comments were made late in 1995 when the copper price touched \$3,000 a tonne. It collapsed in May and June 1996 to under \$2,000, and stood at \$2,278 yesterday.

"I think his statements could have been, and probably were, taken to be misleading," Mr Wolkoff said. "I think what he intended to do was to

assuage the concerns of the market. I think what he did was incorrect."

The Times has obtained copies of letters written by R. Patrick Thompson, president of Nymex, which bring into question the LME's standing in the US. The first, sent on November 29 to the Commodity Futures Trading Commission in Washington, describes the LME's operation as "a potential threat to orderly US markets".

The second, sent on February 12, 1996 to Mr King, calls for an urgent meeting because "a regulatory issue of some sort may exist on the London Metals Exchange".

The pressure is mounting

on the LME, which said it was reopening its investigation into Credit Lyonnais Rouse, the London-based trading arm of the French state bank, after learning of CLR's 20 per cent interest in Winchester Commodities, the small copper trader now being investigated by the Serious Fraud Office.

Panorama revealed that during 1992 and 1993 Charles Vincent, a founder of Winchester, travelled three times to Tokyo, each time taking \$50,000 in cash. This was given to Winchester's Tokyo representative, Shunichi Nishi, and booked as "advanced bonuses paid to Nishi". Yesterday, Japanese prosecutors

alleged that Hamanaka received ¥15 million (\$120,000) in cash from Winchester. His 1993 salary was ¥16.8 million. Winchester and Hamanaka struck a deal called RADR on June 24, 1993, which involved Sumitomo buying copper futures at prices that appeared substantially biased against the Japanese group. The BBC asked Professor Desmond Fitzgerald of Equitable House Group to analyse the deals. He concluded that Winchester made between \$50 million and \$35 million on RADR.

Neither Winchester nor the LME was prepared to comment last night on the Panorama programme.



Lord Bagri: LME chairman

Copper trader takes the blame



Hamanaka: guilty

YASUO HAMANAKA, the former copper trader, told a court in Tokyo yesterday that he alone was responsible for unauthorised copper deals that resulted in massive losses for his employer, Sumitomo Corporation (Robert Whyman writes). The man once known as "Mr Copper" pleaded guilty to forging documents and fraud in a financial scandal that caused a \$2.6 billion loss for Sumitomo.

Dressed in a blue suit, open-necked shirt and green plastic sandals, Hamanaka, 49, showed no emotion as the

prosecution in the Tokyo District Court read out the charges alleging that he swindled a total of \$771 million through Sumitomo's Hong Kong subsidiary on the false pretext of purchasing copper warrants. The money was then used to conceal losses incurred in unauthorised copper trades, it alleged.

Hamanaka admitted falsifying four letters to open accounts. On the fraud charge, he admitted making an improper payment to Morgan Guaranty of New York after losing money on options.

According to the prosecution, Hamanaka received a "gratitude payment" of 15 million yen (£75,000) from Winchester Commodities between the autumn of 1992 and the spring of 1993. He used Winchester's Tokyo office as a broker for some of Sumitomo's transactions on the London Metal Exchange and spent the money received on overseas travel, golf and night clubs, the prosecution said.

This is the first time it has been alleged that Hamanaka benefited personally. The trial continues.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET		
	Yield	Change
FTSE 100	4357.8	(-3.2)
FTSE All Share	2115.17	(-0.95)
Nikkei	15750.85	(+28.65)
New York		
Dow Jones		
S&P Composite		

US RATE		
	Yield	Change
Federal Funds	Closed	(5.75%)
Long Bond	6.50%	(107%)

LONDON MONEY		
	Yield	Change
3-month bank bill	6.50%	(5.75%)
Life long bill	11.5%	(11.5%)

STERLING		
	Yield	Change
New York	Closed	(1.6218)
London		
\$	1.6168	(1.6210)
DM	2.7477	(2.7534)
FF	6.2710	(6.2224)
Sfr	2.2608	(2.3707)
Yen	201.18	(201.23)
£ index	98.0	(97.7)

DOLLAR		
	Yield	Change
London	Closed	(1.6274)
DM		
FF	5.8975	(5.8975)
Sfr	1.4640	(1.4640)
Yen	124.25	(124.25)
£ index	104.2	(103.8)

NORTH SEA OIL		
	Yield	Change
Brent 15-day (May)	\$20.05	(\$20.25)

GOLD		
	Yield	Change
London close	\$344.25	(\$343.55)

Virgin to buy 20% stake in Broncos

BY JASON NISSE

RICHARD BRANSON, rumoured in the past as a possible buyer of Queens Park Rangers and Southampton football clubs, is to buy a 20 per cent stake in a rugby league team, the London Broncos.

The deal is expected to be announced tomorrow, with Mr Branson's Virgin Group paying around £300,000 for a holding in the club.

The investment will significantly raise the profile of the Broncos in the South of England, where the club has struggled to gain a large following despite success on the field. Followers of the sport expect the Broncos to challenge the likes of Bradford, Wigan and St Helens for the Superleague title this summer.

The club has been transformed by Barry Maranta, a former sociology lecturer who founded the highly successful Brisbane Broncos in Australia. Mr Maranta took over the old London Crusaders two years ago and has since ploughed in more than £1.5 million and guided the Broncos to success despite a problem finding a home for the nomadic club.

The team started playing at the Stoop Memorial Ground, the home of rugby union club NEC Harlequins in west London, but left because of the poor quality of the amenities.

Last season the Broncos played at the Valley, the home of Charlton Athletic in south west London, but have returned to the Stoop for this season.

Private investors count the cost of Gas demerger

BY MICHAEL CLARK

MILLIONS of private investors were last night counting the cost of splitting the ill-fated British Gas in two.

Shares of Centrica, the retail arm of British Gas, which includes the Morecambe Bay gasfield and the expensive take-or-pay gas supply contracts, fell 13.5 per cent to end the first day of official trading on the Stock Exchange 104p lower at 654p.

By contrast, BG, which handles the exploration and distribution arms of the business, including TransCo, managed to end the day 24p better at 174p. A total 54.5 million Centrica shares changed hands and almost 20 million BG, equivalent to 10.2 per cent of total stock market turnover.

Brokers said that the sharp fall in Centrica had been prompted by a number of factors, including profit taking after trading for almost two weeks on the unofficial grey market, where the shares rose sharply after opening at 60p.

To make matters worse Merrill Lynch, the broker, told clients that Centrica shares were worth only 40p and that the company was taking an over-optimistic view of the take-or-pay contracts.

The message from other brokers last night indicated that there could be further selling of Centrica by American investors who are unable to deal in the shares freely in



the US because of the absence of an American Depository Receipt facility. There was no US selling of the shares yesterday with Wall Street closed for President's Day.

There will also be a certain amount of repositioning in the

shares among British institutions. The absence of a dividend from Centrica will not entice it to either the income funds or private investors.

Simon Flowers, gas distribution analyst with NatWest Securities, said: "Income funds will have some questions to answer and it's not the natural investment vehicle for small shareholders."

Perversely, Centrica may attract the support of the energy funds which have been going themselves on exploration issues like BG, made more profitable by a strong crude oil price.

Market report, page 28

Christmas cashback at Halifax

BY CAROLINE MERRELL

HALIFAX Building Society fired another shot in the mortgage war yesterday with the launch of a scheme offering up to £10,000 back in cash. On a £50,000 mortgage, borrowers will receive £500 before Christmas for each of the next three years.

This latest aggressive move by the UK's biggest building society follows last week's launch of a range of fixed interest loans, with rates more than 1 per cent lower than the previous Halifax range.

The new scheme will pay borrowers a 1 per cent cashback on completion of the mortgage, plus another 1 per cent on each December 1, until 1999. The maximum total cashback available is £10,000.

Governor backs off over rate increase

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

EDDIE GEORGE, the Governor of the Bank of England, admitted yesterday that the need for an interest rate rise was less urgent than the Bank believed in December. Mr George said that the Government could meet its 2.5 per cent inflation target by the end of this Parliament. He told the House of Commons Treasury Select Committee that there was a "pretty narrow difference" between the Bank's position and the Chancellor's and that the target rate was well within the margin of error in its forecasts.

But he insisted that there had only been a slight softening in the Bank's outlook and that the Bank still believes a rate rise is needed to meet the inflation target in the medium term.

At the December monetary meeting, Mr George suggested a half-point rise in base rates might be needed early this year to control inflation. But the Governor told the Treasury Select Committee that the continuing rise of the pound and weaker than expected economic data had made a rise "absolutely less pressing than it was". Sterling has gained about 15 per cent on a trade-weighted basis since last summer.

But the Governor repeated the Bank's view, outlined in last week's quarterly *Inflation Report*, that a rate rise will be needed if the inflation target is to be met in the medium term.

Mr George described monetary growth, at around 10 per cent, as incompatible with the

inflation target and said that consumer demand remains at above trend levels. The Bank does not believe the high levels of sterling will persist.

The Governor supported opening up the monetary policy committee at the Bank, which formulates its view on inflation, to outside experts. He said: "If the effect is to improve the quality of analysis, I think that could do nothing but good."

Mr George said that sterling would be unlikely to join a single currency at its current exchange rate. He repeated a warning against "premature" moves towards a single currency, saying current levels of divergence between the economies could cause interest rate tension after monetary union.

London Clubs makes a play for Capital

BY OUR CITY STAFF

LONDON CLUBS International yesterday revealed itself as the mystery bidder for Capital Corporation when it launched a hostile share offer that valued the Crookfords and Colony Club casino group at £181 million.

The target company rejected the bid as wholly unwelcome, saying that it totally failed to recognise the value of Capital Corporation. Ladbroke had also been tipped as a potential bidder.

If the bid is successful, London Clubs will increase in size by a third. London Clubs operates seven casinos in London, three in Egypt, one in the South of France and several on cruise ships around the

world. It also has the concession to run the Casino du Liban in Beirut.

Capital shares closed at 171p on Friday, but rose to 186p yesterday after the bid was announced. The shares fell from 160p to 155p on January 7 after Capital gave a warning that profits would be £8.5 million to £9 million for 1996, compared with market forecasts of £13.5 million. They climbed back to 200p at the end of January after the approach from an unknown bidder was revealed.

London Clubs shares fell 6p to 378p. Alan Goodenough, chief executive of London Clubs, said: "The combination of the businesses of Capital Corporation and London Clubs makes excellent commercial sense. The nature of the businesses

operated by both companies will ensure that they are integrated efficiently and with minimal disruption. The combined entity will be well positioned to develop in a way that Capital Corporation as a stand-alone company cannot."

London Clubs believes the deal will improve its ability to take advantage of opportunities in the global gaming market. Its offer rationale also highlights "significant economies of scale, a reduction in central overheads, operational efficiencies and improved controls".

London also believes that it can make the acquisition without diluting earnings in the year to March 1998.

Tempos, page 28



Alan Goodenough says the move makes excellent sense

JOHN BURKE.

Wrote the song: 'Pennies from Heaven'

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مركز التمويل

STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Demerged Centrica falls while BG starts higher

NEWLY demerged Centrica fell sharply at the start of official trading yesterday, with the price tumbling 10½p to 65½p, or 13.5 per cent. Those losses could be extended today when investors on Wall Street return from their extended weekend break.

Brokers in London were last night warning that, with the absence of an American Depository Receipt facility in Centrica, the Americans are likely to turn sellers of the stock. Wall Street was closed yesterday for President's Day.

As it was, a total of 54.5 million Centrica shares had changed hands by the close of business. This, combined with the 19.76 million shares traded in 1996, means that the two companies accounted for 10.2 per cent of total stock market turnover of 726.1 million shares.

By contrast BG, the exploration and distribution arm, which includes troubled TransCo, firmed 2½p to 174½p.

Merrill Lynch, the broker, is telling clients that the real value of Centrica, which includes the retail arm of British Gas, the ill-fated take-or-pay gas supply contracts and the Morecambe Bay gasfield, is around 40p a share. It says optimistic assumptions are being made about the take-or-pay contracts, which have cost British Gas hundreds of millions of pounds. At the same time, its true worth in the case of a bid is not as high as some speculators would wish.

Centrica started trading on the grey market earlier this month at 60p and rose steadily, but its reluctance to pay dividends has caused many small private shareholders to sell. BG opened at 185p after dipping to 134p initially.

Elsewhere, equities made heavy weather of it in the absence of a lead from Wall Street, which had dipped below 7,000 on Friday. After falling almost 22 points from last Friday's closing high, the FT-SE 100 index clawed back most of its losses to close just 3.2 down at 4,337.8.

Railtrack was 10½p better at 393½p as some brokers took the view that recent selling, which has seen the price come back from a peak of 413½p, has been overdone.

BT ended the session 5½p better at 441p amid City whispers that it is pressing the Government to allow it to buy the outstanding 40 per cent in



James Heilig, left, and Norman McLeod, finance director, of Low & Bonar, up 26½p on higher profits and payout

Cellnet from Securicor. The Government blocked the move a couple of years ago, but may now give the go-ahead in the face of increased competition from the likes of Vodafone, down 4p at 283p, Orange, 3p easier at 215p, and Cable and Wireless, 10p off at 501½p.

Brokers estimate that Securicor's stake in Cellnet

impressive profit increase. Brokers picked up on upbeat comments made to the Dutch press over the weekend which sent the price of the N/V stock sharply higher in Amsterdam.

Lloyds TSB rose 15p to 518½p as brokers continued to scrutinise last Friday's sharp jump in full-year pre-tax profits. Barclays, reporting later today, fell 16½p to £11.99½.

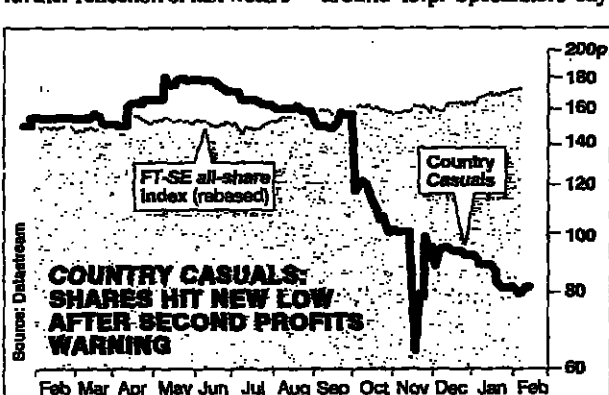
WPP Group, the advertising agency headed by Martin Sorrell, continues to go from strength to strength ahead of tomorrow's figures. These are expected to make positive reading with Panmure Gordon, the broker, rating the shares a "buy". The rise was also fuelled by talk of a share buyback.

could be worth up to £4 billion — not bad for a company that carries a stock market price tag of less than £2 billion. Securicor finished 8p dearer at 311½p with 3.25 million shares traded.

Unilever was the best performing share among the top 100 companies, climbing 6p to £16.04½, or 4.36 per cent, on further reflection of last week's

amid growing concerns about rising costs hitting profits in the second half.

Capital Corporation, the casino operator, jumped 15½p to 186½p as London Clubs, emerged as a potential suitor with an offer worth £181 million. The terms of 47 new London shares for every 100 Capital values the latter at around 181p. Speculators say



FT-SE 100 index (rebased) Country Casuals

Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb

Source: DataStream

Country Casuals: Shares hit new low after second profits warning

Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb

Source: DataStream

Country Casuals: Shares hit new low after second profits warning

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Country Casuals: Shares hit new low after second profits warning

Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb

Source: DataStream

Ladbroke, 2p firmer at 237p, may consider a counter-bid. London finished 6½p lower at 378½p.

A second profits warning in the space of less than three months left Country Casuals 6½p down at 74p. In December it said profits would not be less than £1 million for the year. Now the group says the final outcome would not be less than £100,000. Brokers were not impressed.

Premium Underwriting rose 18p to 175p on news of an agreed £35 million bid from rival Wellington Underwriting, down 8p at 125½p.

Williams Holdings touched 294½p before finishing just 1½p shy at 293p as brokers continued to ponder last week's £1.3 billion bid for Chubb Security, 3p off at 421½p. Some brokers were worried about earnings dilution. The subsequent fall in its share price also sealed its fate as a constituent of the top 100 companies. It has been kicked out to make way for the BG and Centrica.

Full-year figures from Low & Bonar lived up to expectations and the shares responded with a jump of 26½p to 424½p. Pre-tax profits at the packaging group headed by James Heilig, chief executive, were up 3 per cent at £54 million and shareholders are rewarded with an 11 per cent increase in the final payout to 10.7p. In the past few months the price has slumped from a peak of 574p to a low of 385p after problems at its silage wrap and North American packaging business.

Flying Flowers, which unveiled some impressive profit numbers last week, firmed a further 2½p to 222½p. The price was unmoved by the news that Tim Dunningham, a director, has sold 285,000 shares at 218p.

GILT-EDGED: Weaker German bonds and the closure of the US Treasury bond market for a national holiday meant a dull session in London. Prices lost ground in thin trading, with institutional investors reluctant to open fresh positions.

The March series of the long gilt closed ½p lower at £101½, while Treasury 7 per cent 2002 was £1½ down at £100½.

NEW YORK: US markets were closed for the President's Day holiday.

Closing Prices Page 33

MAJOR INDEXES

New York (midday): Closed

S&P Composite

Tokyo:

Nikkei Average

Hong Kong:

Hang Seng

Amsterdam:

Euro Index

Sydney:

ASX

Frankfurt:

DAX

Singapore:

Straits

Brussels:

General

Paris:

CAC-40

Zurich:

SIX

London:

FT 100

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TEMPUS

Grey day for Centrica

IF MARKETS are often imperfect, grey markets are seriously flawed. Unofficial dealings in Centrica shares prior to the demerger created a speculative bubble which burst on the first day of public trading. Income funds prevented from holding shares that do not pay a dividend were obvious sellers of the financially challenged gas marketing company. Sure enough, on the first day of dealings they rushed to the door, causing the price to fall 10½p to 65½p. More selling is expected today as American investors in British Gas unload stock in a company without a US quote.

Takeover speculation was behind the grey market buying, but hopes that a bidder will unlock hidden value look optimistic. Aside from the take-or-pay contract liabilities, Centrica shares could fall to less than 60p.

centric is the loss to Centrica, after a takeover, of the British Gas name, which still carries some goodwill; the company kept 80 per cent of its domestic customers in the recent free market trial. Eventually more important is the risk of losing long-term industrial customers. These contracts — thought to be struck at a high 19p per therm — account for 10 per cent of volume and could be lost on a change of control. Ultimately, Centrica is a creature of the gas price, because of its exposure to expensive supply contracts. The spot price is now down to 12p per therm, but longer-term gas prices will depend on trends in Europe as the interconnector smoothes out the differential between Britain and the Continent. With ample supplies of Russian gas arriving from the East, the price trend must be down. Centrica shares could fall to less than 60p.

Low & Bonar

GAZING at a back of a cereal packet in the morning seems to have excited Jim Heilig, Low & Bonar's chief executive. Kellogg has been kind to Low & Bonar, allowing it good margins to supply the food company with cereal boxes and be would like to extend the relationship.

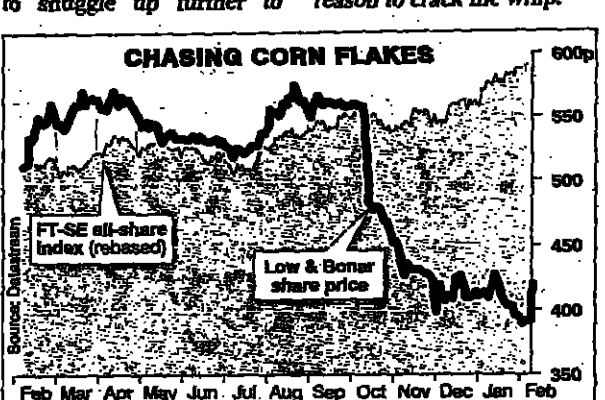
Elsewhere, Low & Bonar is losing margin but the bad news out of the way in its November profits warning, and it seems that there are to be no more nasty surprises. Plastics is back on its feet and the company seems to have written off its silagewrap division. With packaging now accounting for 51 per cent of profits, Low & Bonar wants to extend its influence to the Continent. But it may be a bit too far. Kellogg's worldwide review

of suppliers, which Low & Bonar sees as an opportunity, is more likely to be an attempt to crush the last dregs of surplus margin from its suppliers. When Kellogg itself is under pressure from the supermarkets, it would be unlikely to spare its suppliers from the pain.

Low & Bonar may be keen to struggle up further to

Kellogg but next year the cereal giant will have the chance to inject a bit of variety into its British suppliers for the first time since it sold off its division four years ago.

In an industry already rife with competition, Low & Bonar's largest customer would appear to have every reason to crack the whip.



Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb

Allied Carpets

AS multiple retailers grow, the corner shop is sold. However, against the odds, most carpets sold in this country still come from small, local shops rather than national chain stores.

Lord Harris's Carpetright and the recently floated Allied Carpets are confident that change is on the way. The only major carpet multiple in Britain each has roughly 14 per cent of the market and both see plenty of room for expansion. This is bad news for independents, but an interesting situation for investors.

Given the ambitions of the two chains, it will not be long before they compete head-to-head and investors need to look at the winners. So far, Allied has been making all the running. Its shares were heavily discounted when it joined the stock market but they have since climbed and are now trading on a prospective p/e ratio of 22 times

compared with Carpetright's 21 times. The rating is hard to justify, given that Allied Carpets admitted yesterday that its promotional activities have put its margins under heavy pressure. All in all, Carpetright looks a better bet.

Capital Corp

LONDON CLUBS has timed its bid well but it is still difficult to understand why anyone would pay £181 million for a couple of Mayfair casinos. On the expected profits of £9 million for the year just ended, the offer price is a ludicrous 32 times earnings. Of course, London Clubs has pitched its bid on the back of a poor set of results, already forecast by Capital Corporation. A recent profit warning, Crocford's had rotten luck with some wealthy customers walking out the door with a lot more money than they took in. All casinos suffer swings and roundabouts but over

time the winnings should approach an average of 18-20 per cent of money staked. The real concern for upmarket casinos is whether the really flush punters come in the door at all. For London Clubs the attraction of Capital is Crocford's; taking over that establishment would give it about half of the market in posh London casinos and therefore, more chance of capturing a bigger share of the cash that drips off rich gamblers.

Were Capital's profits to reach £12 million in the current year, the exit multiple would still be 22 times, a handsome 40 per cent premium to the market. This is hard to see why such volatile profits deserve a premium rating, but London Clubs is paying, for the scarcity value of Crocford's. Investors might have preferred a less glamorous, cheaper and less risky investment in mass-market entertainment.

EDITED BY CARL MORTISTHED

COMMODITIES

ICEBERG LONDON (6.00pm) CRUDE OILS (Brent FOB)

Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

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Spot CIF NW Europe (prompt delivery)

□ Huge fines the only answer to train failure □ Labour could be more friendly to bidders □ Trouble at the petrol pump

The excuse now waiting...

□ COMMUTERS from leafy suburbs in south London and as far out as Hampshire have noticed a sharp deterioration in their rail journeys to work. Clapped-out stock, trains shorter than usual with standing room only, more frequent cancellations — and now we know why.

The admission by Stagecoach, the first successful bidder for a British Rail franchise, that it has made a pig's ear of running South West Trains is the most humiliating setback yet for rail privatisation.

It is more humiliating than the cheap sales of public assets such as Porterbrook and Eversholt that turned out to be worth so much more to their management a few months later. Even worse than the grotesque rises in the stock market worth of day train operators after franchise deals that guaranteed profits. Worse than all those new millionaires created by the coachful, or seeing Railtrack shares, the only bit sold direct to private investors and City institutions, now worth twice what the Government got last summer.

All the above has been excused as the inevitable consequence of a difficult privatisation that turned out to be an unexpected success. We are even braced for the process to be repeated with the London Underground.

The management of Eversholt and Porterbrook, the leasing

companies, and their City backers won in the first round of bidding because no one else was prepared to pay more. Once the companies' true value had been established, the businesses were sold for a 55 per cent gain and some managers started looking for their own football teams. Their willingness to take risks made their fortunes.

Yet the excuse no longer washes if there is no improvement in the quality of service to the public. The reason for selling British Rail was to ensure entrepreneurial firms such as Stagecoach used their skills to make people's journeys more comfortable, if not actually cheaper. On some routes improvement has arrived, on others it is still in the sidings.

It is now down to the Office of Passenger Rail Franchising (OPRAF), one of rail's two regulators, to fine Stagecoach for the failings of South West Trains. The fines should be large: this is the corollary to all those windfall gains. If you are brought in to make improvements, you deserve no profits in the absence of them — that is only logical.

But what is this? The fines may be levied in secret. No one yet knows how much they could be, and this may not emerge until the OPRAF annual report, but tens of thousands of pounds is the general impression. Stagecoach, with a stock market capitalisation of £1.7 billion, was blithely confident last night that any sum would be "not material" to its fortunes.

This is clearly not on. Commuters waiting this morning to be shoehorned, late, into antediluvian rolling stock should have confidence that their misery is matched by real financial damage to the rail company.

Takeover climate still temperate

□ THE Gulf Canada bid for Clyde Petroleum will close today. Most other takeover bids are well into the end game, except for the two fresh outbreaks last week, Chubb and Whesoe, and Capital Corporation yesterday. Aside from that, on the mergers and acquisitions front that's about all, folks. There are the odd



rumours of a mega-bid, and the usual candidates are dusted off. But anyone who gambled big time on the rumours is regretting it.

The obvious reason is the impending general election. The 60-day bid timetable means that a takeover launched today might not squeeze under the wire but go to an incoming Labour administration — and Labour, if elected, can be expected to be inimical to takeovers.

Says who? Almost two years ago Gordon Brown suggested the bidder might have to show that the takeover served the public interest, an inversion of the current state of affairs where a bid can only be blocked if seen to be a bad thing. Labour has

softened since. Last month Tony Blair appeared to contradict Mr Brown — hardly for the first time — and suggest that his Chancellor's earlier proposals might require the Monopolies and Mergers Commission to make "a judgment about the relative competence of two sets of managers. This is very difficult for a public body to do."

True, even if any ruling on individual bids must contain an element of subjectivity. The public interest requirement is dead, along with any plans to merge the MMC with the Office of Fair Trading. Two other factors suggest Labour might not be so dead set against takeovers, hostile or otherwise. A Blair government can be expected actively to favour deals that create national champions better able to resist competition from overseas, whatever the short-term effect on jobs.

The second factor is the normal weight of political inertia. A radical shake-up of competition policy is going to be a long way behind schools, crime, a windfall tax and other matters which Labour has said are its priorities if in office.

Corporate finance teams, once the election is over, may have a couple more good years ahead of them yet.

Competing cultures of complaint

□ MOST of us are willing to believe the worst about oil multinationals — a healthy prejudice. As a result, the UK petrol market has been referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission three times. It was also subjected to a special study by the Office of Fair Trading on alleged profiteering in the Gulf war.

Each time the industry's critics failed to make enough dirt stick to justify more than a watching brief by the competition authorities. Now the market has turned right round. The challenge from food retailers and over-capacity in refining has meant fierce competition, keeping prices down. But complaints have not abated.

Independent retailers say they are squeezed unfairly in the middle, victims of unfair behaviour that will carve up the

market and create monopoly by driving them out of business. The director-general of fair trading is not too worried. Competition seems perfect.

If the oil industry had a regulator, as the utilities have, he would have to worry a great deal. There would be regular outcries; Richard Branson would be all over the media; and action would be demanded. The same might happen if the OFT itself had executive powers, making it a general regulator instead of a conduit to the MMC.

Whatever the state of the market, someone is always losing and someone is always aggrieved. The lesson is that perfect competition in electricity, gas or telecoms will not create an era in which regulation fades away. The Ofcom will be as busy and as obnoxious as ever.

Top of the pops

□ THE person teenagers would most trust to advise on their finances is Chris Evans, the volatile but rich disc jockey, according to a survey from the unit trust people. They are least likely to trust their savings with the Chancellor, joint bottom with someone called Mystic Meg. Which proves that the current generation lack none of their predecessors' skills at providing silly answers to daft questions.

Institutions hold key to Clyde future

By CARL MORTIMER

A MYSTERY investor yesterday snapped up 4.4 million shares in Clyde Petroleum, the independent oil company whose future will be decided today after a hard-fought battle against the 120p-per-share bid from Gulf Canada Resources.

The single block of four million shares changed hands at the bid price of 120p and is thought to have gone into hands friendly to Clyde Petroleum. The investor amassed the remaining stake from market-makers, creating a holding of about 1 per cent.

The last-minute share deal could be important to Clyde. However, it may not be enough to secure its independence as yesterday the bid moved sharply in Gulf's favour when the Canadian bidder announced that it had secured control of 40.97 per cent of the UK explorer's stock. Gulf has received acceptances from shares representing 10.98 per cent of Clyde and has acquired shares amounting to 29.99 per cent of the UK company, the maximum permitted under the Takeover Code. Gulf indicated that it had

acceptances for a further 1.46 per cent of Clyde, but these were not yet validated.

A small number of institutions are key to the outcome of the bid as private shareholders own only about 3 per cent of Clyde. Gulf scored an important gain when PDM, the fund manager, sold its 14 per cent stake to Gulf but Schroders, a fund manager thought to be supportive of Clyde, has yet to declare its intentions. Other big investors include Norwich Union, Whitington Investments and Capital Group, the American fund manager.

Some analysts query the wisdom of Schroders turning down the 120p bid when the crude oil price has been slipping. "I think they will be very brave to stick with it," one broker said. The price of the Brent crude oil contract has fallen from above \$24 at the start of January to less than \$21 and the futures market suggest the slide will continue with analysts predicting a surge in supply amid expectations of Opec overproduction.

Winning a National Training Award means prestige, better recruits, publicity and a certain amount of quiet satisfaction.



Care firm must unpick lease deal

By ROBERT BRUCE

ASSOCIATED Nursing Services, the nursing home company, has been forced to unravel sale and leaseback arrangements and restate its accounts for the past two years after a landmark ruling by the Financial Reporting Review Panel.

Associated's leaseback agreement was an industry standard supplied by Nursing Home Properties (NHP). Daniel Francis, NHP finance director, said: "The Review Panel's decision is not well-informed and will have a knock-on effect right across every company that has a sale and leaseback agreement."

The dispute centred on whether associated companies are subsidiaries. The NHP agreement fell foul of rules on off balance sheet finance.

Frederick Brown, Associated's finance director, said: "We are being told that assets which were on the Nursing Home Properties balance sheet now have to be on our balance sheet."

Ex-Penguin chief tells of dismay

By ERIC REGULY

PETER MAYER, the former chief executive of Penguin, the book publisher, said yesterday that he was shocked and dismayed by the disclosure that improper accounting had left a £100 million hole in the accounts.

In his first comments since the scandal emerged last Thursday, Mr Mayer, who had been travelling in Asia for the past six weeks, said that he would co-operate fully with Pearson's investigation into the matter.

The company has hired Price Waterhouse, the accounting firm, and the New York law office of Cravath, Swaine & Moore to determine how a junior bookkeeper in Penguin's accounts office in New Jersey was able to extend unauthorised discounts to retailers since 1991 in exchange for prompt payments. Mr Mayer said: "I had no suspicion that anything was wrong in the accounts department."

Wellington £34.9m bid impresses Premium

WELLINGTON Underwriting, the specialist Lloyd's insurer, has beaten off an unnamed bidder to make a £34.9 million recommended offer for Premium Underwriting (Gavin Lumsden writes). Julian Avery, group managing director, said the offer was a cost-effective way of raising new capital and gave Wellington more than £600 million of capacity. It also maintains £82 million of loans between PU and Premium Trust and Coriander in the Isle of Man.

The offer overvalues Premium by 37.2 per cent on Friday's closing price. This pushed down Wellington shares 8p to 125.5p but boosted Premium by 18p to 175p.

Wellington is offering 125 new shares for every 100 shares in Premium plus £25.20 in cash. Hoare Govett is arranging a cash alternative. It has received an irrevocable undertaking from Codelouf, a shareholder with 27 per cent of the voting rights in Premium.

If you'd like to bask in the glory of winning a 1997 National Training Award, contact your local TEC/LEC in England and Scotland, the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQs) in Wales and the Training and Employment Agency in Northern Ireland. You'll find their numbers in your local telephone directory right next to your competitors.

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THE TIMES

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the business



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STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Demerged Centrica falls while BG starts higher

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By contrast BG, the exploration and distribution arm, which includes troubled TransCo, firmed 2 1/2p to 174 1/2p.

Merrill Lynch, the broker, is telling clients that the real value of Centrica, which includes the retail arm of British Gas, the ill-fated take-over of the Morecambe Bay gasfield, is around 40p a share. It says optimistic assumptions are being made about the take-over contracts, which have cost British Gas hundreds of millions of pounds. At the same time, its true worth in the case of a bid is not as high as some speculators would wish.

Centrica started trading on the grey market earlier this month at 60p and rose steadily, but its reluctance to pay dividends has caused many small private shareholders to sell. BG opened at 185p after dipping to 184 1/2p.

Elsewhere, equities made heavy weather of it in the absence of a lead from Wall Street, which had dipped below 7,000 on Friday. After falling almost 22 points from last Friday's closing high, the FT-SE 100 index clawed back most of its losses to close just 3.2 down at 4,337.8.

Railtrack was 10 1/2p better at 393 1/2p as some brokers took the view that recent selling, which has seen the price come back from a peak of 413 1/2p, has been overdone.

BT ended the session 5 1/2p better at 441p amid City whispers that it is pressing the Government to allow it to buy the outstanding 40 per cent in



James Heilig, left, and Norman McLeod, finance director, of Low & Bonar, up 20 1/2p on higher profits and payout

Cellnet from Securicor. The Government blocked the move a couple of years ago, but may now give the go-ahead in the face of increased competition from the likes of Vodafone, down 4p at 283p. Orange, 3p easier at 215p, and Cable and Wireless, 10p off at 510 1/2p.

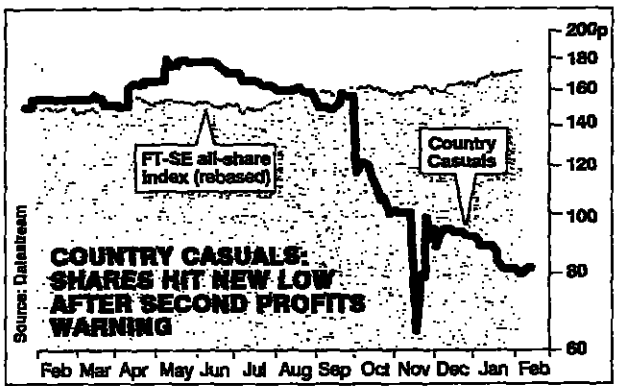
Brokers estimate that Securicor's stake in Cellnet WPP Group, the advertising agency headed by Martin Sorrell, continues to go from strength to strength ahead of tomorrow's figures. These are expected to make positive reading with Panmure Gordon, the broker, rating the shares a "buy". The rise was also fuelled by talk of a share buyback.

could be worth up to £4 billion — not bad for a company that carries a stock market price tag of less than £2 billion. Securicor finished 8p dearer at 311 1/2p with 3.25 million shares traded.

Unilever was the best performing share among the top 100 companies, climbing 6 1/2p to £16.04, or 4.36 per cent, on further reflection of last week's

amid growing concerns about rising costs hitting profits in the second half.

Capital Corporation, the casino operator, jumped 15 1/2p to 186 1/2p as London Clubs, emerged as a potential suitor with an offer worth £181 million. The terms of 47 new London shares for every 100 Capital shares the latter at around 181p. Speculators say



Source: Datastream

Ladbroke, 2p firmer at 237p, may consider a counter-bid. London finished 6 1/2p lower at 378 1/2p.

A second profits warning in the space of less than three months left Country Casuals 6 1/2p down at 74p. In December it said profits would not be less than £1 million for the year. Now the group says the final outcome would not be less than £100,000. Brokers were not impressed.

Premium Underwriting rose 18p to 175p on news of an agreed £35 million bid from rival Wellington Underwriting, down 8p at 125 1/2p.

Williams Holdings touched 294 1/2p before finishing just 1 1/2p shy at 293p as brokers continue to ponder last week's £1.3 billion bid for Club Security. Sp off at 421 1/2p. Some brokers worried about earnings dilution. The subsequent fall in its share price also sealed its fate as a constituent of the top 100 companies. It has been kicked out to make way for the BG and Centrica.

Full-year figures from Low & Bonar lived up to expectations and the shares responded with a jump of 26 1/2p to 424 1/2p. Pre-tax profits at the packaging group headed by James Heilig, chief executive, were up 3 per cent at £54 million and shareholders were rewarded with an 11 per cent increase in the final payout to 10.7p. In the past few months the price has slumped from a peak of 574p to a low of 389p after problems at the slag-wrapping and North American packaging business.

Flying Flowers, which unveiled some impressive profit numbers last week, firmed a further 2 1/2p to 222 1/2p. The price was unmoved by the news that Tim Dunningham, a director, has sold 285,000 shares at 218p.

GLT-EDGED: Weaker Government bonds and the closure of the US Treasury bond market for a national holiday meant a dull session in London. Prices lost ground in this trading, with institutional investors reluctant to open fresh positions.

The March series of the long gilt closed 1/8p lower at £113 1/8, Treasury 8 per cent 2021 was 1/8p lower at £107 1/8, while Treasury 7 per cent 2002 was 1/8p down at £100 1/8.

NEW YORK: US markets were closed for the President's Day holiday.

MAJOR INDEXES

New York (midday):

Dow Jones 8877.00 (+10.00)

S&P Composite 1070.00 (+10.00)

Tokyo Nikkei Average 18750.00 (+25.00)

Hong Kong Hang Seng 13144.00 (+31.30)

Amsterdam EOX Index 731.00 (+12.50)

Sydney All Ordinaries 2693.2 (+10.60)

Frankfurt DAX 3232.97 (+15.61)

Singapore Straits Times 2258.10 (+3.60)

Brussels General 11693.36 (+3.30)

Paris CAC 40 2634.48 (+7.28)

Zurich SMI 943.10 (+5.50)

London FT 100 2945.8 (-12.4)

FT 100 2945.8 (-12.4)

FTSE Mid 250 4600.5 (+0.5)

FTSE 250 4600.5 (+0.5)

FTSE Eurozone 100 2162.50 (+0.2)

FT All-Share 2113.17 (+0.95)

FT Non Financials 2153.95 (+1.83)

FT Real Estate 1193.00 (+0.20)

FT Govt Secs 96.30 (+0.19)

Bargains 50738

SEAQ Volume 726.1m

US\$ 1.5107 (+0.0008)

German Mark 2.7473 (+0.0028)

Exchange Index 98.0 (+0.3)

Bank of England official close 4.400

ESR 1.1742

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TEMPUS

Grey day for Centrica

IF MARKETS are often imperfect, grey markets are seriously flawed. Unofficial dealings in Centrica shares prior to the demerger created a speculative bubble which burst on the first day of public trading. Income funds prevented from holding shares that do not pay a dividend were obvious sellers of the financially challenged gas marketing company. Sure enough, on the first day of dealings they rushed to the door, causing the price to fall 10 1/2p to 65 1/2p. More selling is expected today as American investors in British Gas unload stock in a company without a US quote.

Takeover speculation was behind the grey market buying, but hopes that a bidder will unlock hidden value look optimistic. Aside from the take-over, contract liabilities, Centrica has other potential poison pills. Often

cited is the loss to Centrica, after a takeover, of the British Gas name, which still carries some goodwill; the company kept 80 per cent of its domestic customers in the recent free market trial. Potentially more important is the risk of losing long-term industrial customers. These contracts — thought to be struck at a high 19p per therm — account for 10 per cent of volume and could be lost on a change of control.

Ultimately, Centrica is a creature of the gas price, because of its exposure to expensive supplies. The spot price is now down to 12p per therm, but longer-term gas prices will depend on trends in Europe as the interconnector smoothes out the differential between Britain and the Continent. With ample supplies of Russian gas arriving from the East, the price trend must be down. Centrica shares could fall to less than 60p.

Low & Bonar

GAZING at a back of a cereal packet in the morning seems to have excited Jim Heilig, Low & Bonar's chief executive. Kellogg has been kind to Low & Bonar, allowing it good margins to supply the food company with cereal boxes and the world's largest extend the relationship.

Elsewhere, Low & Bonar is losing margin but the bad news was out of the way in its November profits warning, and it seems that there are to be no more nasty surprises. Plastics is back on its feet and the company seems to have written off its slagwagwag division. With packaging now accounting for 51 per cent of profits, Low & Bonar wants to extend its influence to the Continent.

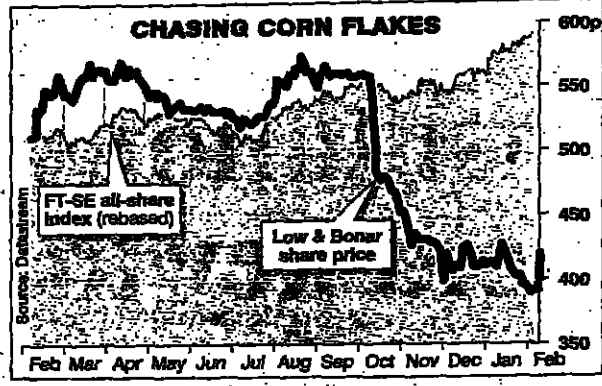
But it may be a bit too far. Kellogg's worldwide review

of suppliers, which Low & Bonar sees as an opportunity, is more likely to be an attempt to crush the last flake of surplus margin from its suppliers. When Kellogg itself is under pressure from the supermarkets, it would be unlikely to spare its suppliers from the pain.

Low & Bonar may be keen to smuggle up further to

Kellogg but next year the cereal giant will have the chance to inject a bit of variety into its British suppliers for the first time since it sold off its division four years ago.

In an industry already rife with competition, Low & Bonar's largest customer would appear to have every reason to crack the whip.



Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb

AS multiple retailers grow, the corner shop is sold. However, against the odds, most carpets sold in this country still come from small, local shops rather than national chain stores.

Lord Harris's Carpetright and the recently floated Allied Carpets are confident that change is on the way. The only major carpet multiples in Britain each has roughly 14 per cent of the market and both see plenty of room for expansion. This is bad news for independents, but an interesting situation for investors.

Given the ambitions of the two chains, it will not be long before they compete head-to-head and investors need to back the winner. So far, Allied has been making all the running. Its shares were heavily discounted when it joined the stock market but they have since climbed and are now trading on a prospective p/e ratio of 22 times

compared with Carpetright's 21 times. The rating is hard to justify, given that Allied Carpets admitted yesterday that its promotional activities have put its margins under heavy pressure. All in all, Carpetright looks a better bet.

Capital Corp

LONDON CLUBS has timed its bid well but it is still difficult to understand why anyone would pay £181 million for a couple of Mayfair casinos. On the expected profits of £9 million for the year just ended, the offer price is a ludicrous 32 times earnings. Of course, London Clubs has pitched its bid on the back of a poor set of results, already forecast by Capital Corporation in recent profits warning. Crocford's had rotten luck with some wealthy customers walking out the door with a lot more money than they took in.

All casinos suffer swings and roundabouts but over

time the winnings should approach an average of 18-20 per cent of money staked. The real concern for upmarket casinos is whether the really flush punters come in the door at all. For London Clubs the attraction of Capital is Crocford's; taking over that establishment would give it about half of the market in posh London casinos and therefore, more chance of capturing a bigger share of the cash that drips off rich gamblers.

Were Capital's profits to reach £12 million in the current year, the exit multiple would still be 22 times, a handsome 40 per cent premium to the market. It is hard to see why such volatile profits deserve a premium rating but London Clubs is paying for the scarcity value of Crocford's. Investors might have preferred a less glamorous, cheaper and less risky investment in mass-market entertainment.

EDITED BY CARL MORTIMER

COMMODITIES

ICE-LOX (London 6.00p)

CRUDE OILS (per barrel FOB)

Brent 15 day (April) 20.45 -0.15

Brent 15 day (May) 20.45 -0.15

WTI Intermediate (April) 20.45 -0.15

WTI Intermediate (May) 20.45 -0.15

WTI Intermediate (June) 20.45 -0.15

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GNI LONDON GRAIN FUTURES

LIFE WHEAT

LIFE WHEAT

LIFE WHEAT

LIFE WHEAT

LIFE WHEAT

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Careful Auntie playing safe

THE BBC is clearly getting extremely careful about what it sends out across the airwaves. Yesterday the corporation conducted a hush-hush screening of its BBC Panorama programme *The Copper Ring*, which made accusations about the conduct of the notorious Ashley Levitt and Charlie Vincent, of Winchester Commodities. In the room next door at Broadcasting House a seminar was being held entitled "Law for Broadcasters".

Movie thriller

STEPHEN WILSON, a US district court judge, fell asleep while watching the smash-hit movie *Jerry Maguire*, forcing him to postpone a decision on whether or not to dismiss the \$110 million lawsuit over product placement in the Tom Cruise film, which is opening in England this week.

Wilson, who admits to dozing off, said he needs to finish watching the film before ruling whether Reebok International is entitled to damages because the film's producers reaped on a deal to show a Reebok commercial during the film. Wilson (nominated for an Oscar for the role) as the fictional football player Rod Tidwell during the movie's closing credits. Trial is set for May 6. TriStar Pictures, the production company, has applied to dismiss the legal action as being without merit.



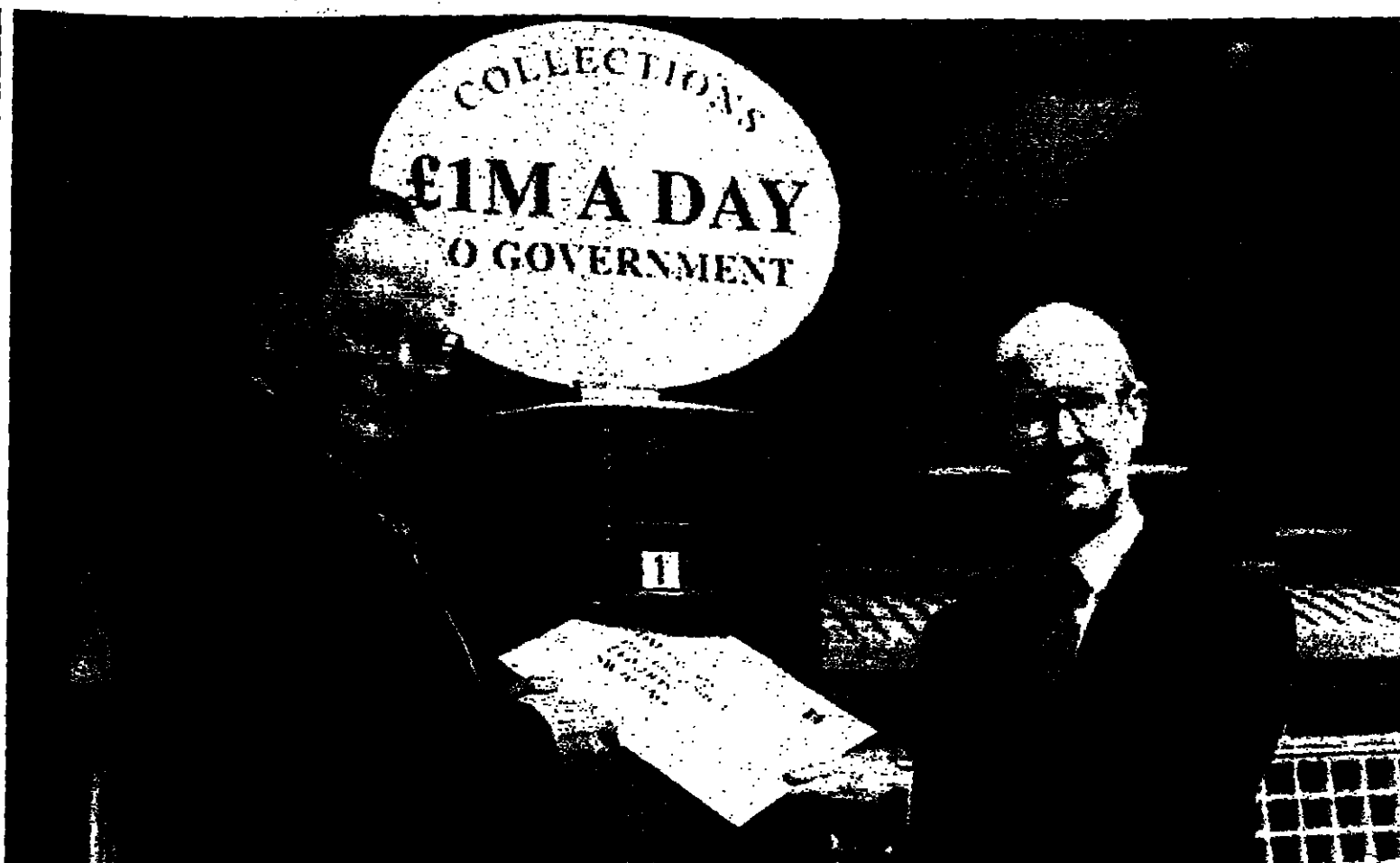
ON THE day that London Clubs, the casino group, bid for its rival Capital Corporation the Dutch appear to have perfected breeding of the black tulip. Its name: "blackjack".

Goldman scraps

A PARK-IN protest flared up yesterday at the taxi rank beside the Fleet Street offices of Goldman Sachs as the American-owned merchant bank became embroiled in a cabbies' scrap. The drivers are on the Computer Cab circuit, which is proposing to join the Alternative Investment Market. Only 500 or so of ComCab's 2,000 drivers have been fitted with a satellite tracking system, causing resentment among other drivers, who claim that the best jobs, including work with Goldman, is handed out via the system.

Crusty aussies

PEPSICO Restaurants found itself with rather more publicity than it had bargained for. Down Under after its new Pizza Hut commercial advising people to "get stuffed" was branded as offensive. Local politicians called for the billboard poster, which was put up outside Sydney Airport to promote Pizza Hut's new cheese stuffed crust pizza, to be immediately pulled down. They said that the wording — "Welcome to Australia. Now you can get stuffed." — sent out the wrong kind of message to visitors. However, an unrepentant PepsiCo marketing director said the poster was staying. He said: "My kids think it's hilarious. Here in Australia we have a very rich language and a strong sense of the vernacular. That's who we are as a country; we are a little bit out there."



Mail-shot: Sir Michael Heron, the chairman of the Post Office, and John Roberts, chief executive, posting a payment to the Treasury

What the future may deliver for Britain's Post Office

Philip Bassett examines the post-election options for a threatened business

New measures were put forward yesterday aimed at ensuring the post-election future of a British business beleaguered by politics: the Post Office.

The Post Office is a success story. Twenty years of profits, all subsidised by the taxpayer; 18 billion items of mail a year; high standards of service and widespread public approval. But senior Post Office managers insist that this exemplary record is under threat on two fronts.

The first is from technology as people increasingly turn to alternative forms of communication, the phone, fax, e-mail. The second is from overseas competitors. The Post Office's position as the pre-eminent postal service in Europe has slipped, with the networks of The Netherlands and Irish Republic now scoring higher on service delivery than the UK.

The Post Office managers put the blame squarely on government rules that restrict its ability to compete on both fronts.

Although no mention of the idea was made at the time of the last election, the Government attempted to address the issue by way of its traditional route of privatisation. But in the face of extensive public opposition and a revolt among its own backbenchers, ministers had to abandon the move.

John Major, the Prime Minister, has indicated the Conservatives' readiness to return to the issue after the election. If the Conservative Party is returned, and if it has a sufficient majority, Post Office managers expect it to proceed with a new privatisation move.

For Labour, beating off the threat of privatisation was vital, but the party has not moved much beyond a generalised declaration that if elected to government it will give the Post Office the greater commercial freedom it has long sought.

As Mexican stand-offs go, this is politically sustainable, especially if the Post Office keeps turning in profits and

ploughing funds into the Treasury's coffers through its negative external financing limit (EFL): that is, instead of being a net beneficiary of government money, like, say, health or education, the Post Office is a net contributor.

But Post Office managers insist the threats of changing technology and growing competition mean that it is increasingly operationally unsustainable. One way or another, they are looking to the election to break the political logjam.

At the London headquarters of the Industrial Society yesterday, a way of moving the logs was offered — curiously enough by a union that only a few months ago was locked into a series of potentially damaging strikes against the Post Office. Even more curiously perhaps, the Post Office broadly welcomed the proposals from the leaders of the Communication Workers' Union (CWU) in a consultative document amusingly styled, in terms of typeface and design, on a government Green Paper.

John Roberts, the Post Office's chief executive, who only recently attacked the CWU's dinosaur tactics in last year's strikes, talked yesterday of common ground, agreement with the union and of welcoming its support. He said: "It's encouraging that the CWU in its 'green paper' on the future of the Post Office takes a constructive view of many of the current challenges."

Given the decline of union strength, many unions now have only a limited focus on how their members are dealt

with. Only a few, perhaps the CWU, the FDA grouping of senior civil servants, the Royal College of Nursing, Balpa and Equity, have an impact on what their members do in the organisations in which they work. Few people, for instance, either know or care what the TGWU, the transport workers' union, thinks about, say, heavy lorries.

Although Alan Johnson and Tony Young, the CWU's joint general secretaries, insisted yesterday that the document was non-party political, the determination of people such as Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, to privatise the Post Office if at all possible makes it clear that the real object of the union's move is a new Labour government.

The sometimes strained relations between new Labour and the unions rest partly on the fact that in spite of the Labour-union joint rhetoric of fairness not favours, many unions see the possible advent of a Labour government as a time to draw up their shopping lists — still not fully or even at all realising that the surefire way of not getting what they want from Tony Blair, the Labour leader, is such a list.

In terms of the unions and similar groups, Mr Blair is much more interested in what they can do for Britain under a Labour government, rather than what a Labour government can do for them.

In that light, the CWU will come forward before the election with new proposals on telecommunications, for instance, including pricing, and on

what relationship generally unions can have not with the Labour Party but with the different animal of a Labour government.

Yesterday's Post Office proposals from the union sketched out a blueprint for Labour in government on this issue: a method of keeping the Post Office in the public sector, but removing it from the straitjacket of the system of public finances that govern its cash contributions in precisely the same way as education or health cash use; a new measure of deficit for government activity; a specific limit on EFL payments; an RPI-X price cap on the Post Office's monopoly items; and a new independent regulator.

Labour needs the Post Office to carry on being successful, partly in terms of ideology as the only real business remaining in the nationalised sector and partly in terms of cashflow. A new Labour government as strapped for cash as the Conservatives would be unlikely to walk quickly away from the guaranteed cash tap that the Post Office provides.

Something like the CWU's proposals could be the way for Labour to expand the Post Office's market share and so profits, continuing the EFL money stream but allowing the Post Office to invest more for further profitability: a virtuous circle.

Conservative ministers insist that there is no scope in such ideas, and that only privatisation will work, and that such half-way-house ideas will only give a still publicly owned Post Office grotesquely unfair advantage in the market place, but would blow a hole in the control of the public finances.

Either way, the Post Office, long mired in political argument, wants movement. As the Dutch postal service steps up its UK operations, and as E-mailing someone in California becomes as easy as calling someone in Clapham, Britain's postal system is waiting for a new operating framework — delivery courtesy of the coming election.



ANATOLE KALESKY

Bulls should enjoy another good run

It has been a week of historic milestones for financial markets. On Wall Street last Thursday, the Dow Jones industrial average shot through 7,000 and the S&P composite simultaneously breached 800.

In London, meanwhile, the pound hit DM2.77, just a whisker below its old ERM floor of DM2.780. And yesterday the dollar rose for the first time in four years to DM1.70 — a level that would have been considered still absurdly cheap back in the 1980s, but which during the dark days of the dollar, when the US currency was languishing well below DM1.40, many market experts said would never be seen again.

Should arbitrary records like this be of interest to anyone except the financial equivalent of train-spotters? In the present feverish state of the global markets I think the answer is yes. On January 10, when I last discussed the outlook for the world economy on this page, it seemed, at least to me, that 1997 might be a relatively dull year for financial markets. Sterling's upsurge already appeared to be exhausted. At least against the dollar. The New York and London stock markets seemed set for a long period of directionless trading within established ranges.

And even the steady hardening of the dollar against the mark, which was clearly bound to go much further, looked as though it might continue at a rather subdued pace.

Indeed, the most ambitious target I could bring myself to mention for the dollar/mark exchange rate was "at least DM1.70".

It is now clear that many of these predictions were wrong on, at least, two counts. Events in 1997 are taking a much more dramatic turn than I had expected. Let me begin with the market where my expectations have been most clearly confounded. In early January it seemed, to me at least, most likely that a long period of directionless trading would frustrate both the bulls and the bears.

I did, however, suggest that a more dramatic, but less probable, alternative: another big gain of 20 per cent or so followed by an equally sharp fall. Now this boom-bust scenario seems much more likely. The main reason is the feedback relationship between share prices, currencies and world economic growth.

On one hand, the dollar's parabolic trajectory reflects an upsurge of international confidence in the US economy and in the American model of corporate governance. This will contribute to further gains in Wall Street and in corporate equities generally — and such gains will add, in a virtuous circle, to the world's desire to hold more dollars.

On the other hand, the abrupt weakening of the European currencies, which is the mirror image of the strong dollar, will assure a decent economic recovery in Europe and make it easier for politicians to agree on a soft euro as the natural replacement for the mark. Thus the softening of the European currencies and the consequent return of economic competitiveness to Europe will reinforce the general state of global economic confidence and give another push to the upwards trend in stock markets from the European side.

Where does all this leave Britain and sterling? Half-way between America and Europe, Britain could enjoy the best of both worlds.

The pound may rise a little further against the mark, but should fall quite a bit against the dollar. This would offer many British companies exactly what they want. London shares should, as usual, follow Wall Street, even if they do not do quite as well.

Sooner or later, no doubt, these benign financial trends will get out of hand and markets will fall back to earth with a thump. Indeed, a bullish stampede in the coming months could well be the final phase of the worldwide bull market that began in 1982. But before a bear market starts — and perhaps foreshadows the next recession — the bulls should enjoy another good run.

BUSINESS LETTERS

Good age balance in business should not be confined to management level

From Mr Richard Worsley, Sir, Graham Searjeant's comments on the prejudices against both older and younger people as board members ("Gilded youth can spice up that politically correct board", February 6) are as refreshing as his plea for some risk-taking and the abandonment of a rigid formula of recruitment in business.

He describes a self-defeating rigidity that leads to the Catch 22 absurdity of so many capable young people being denied opportunities because of their inexperience, while older people are being turned away because they are too experienced.

The Employers Forum on Age (EFA) exists to support

and guide employers who have recognised the business benefits of a mixed-age workforce. We would like to add two postscripts to your timely article:

First, the benefits of a good balance of age apply not just to boardrooms, but at all levels of employment.

Next month the EFA will be publishing guidance on how to recruit in order to achieve a mixed-age workforce. The report, *Getting the Balance Right in Recruitment*, will be available to both members and non-members.

Yours faithfully, RICHARD WORSLEY, Employers Forum on Age, Astral House, 1268 London Road, SW16.

Causes of negative equity and mortgage arrears

From the Deputy Director-General, Council of Mortgage Lenders

Sir, Pennington (January 30) rather cynically acknowledges the welcome fall in the number of possession cases reported by Michael Coogan, Director-General of the Council of Mortgage Lenders. The column correctly notes that rising prices are not producing rising possessions but the very opposite effect — which is what the CML and lenders have long argued.

However, the article does repeat yet another mishandled belief which is that those in negative equity are also those in arrears. Clearly there will

be some in this position but the primary causes of arrears are unemployment, financial mismanagement and relationship breakdown which can occur in any household, in any region, regardless of the equity in the property.

Negative equity and arrears are not mutually exclusive but neither is one necessarily a cause of the other. The majority of those in negative equity are not in arrears and continue, where they are able, to pay their mortgages.

Yours faithfully, PETER WILLIAMS, Deputy Director-General, Council of Mortgage Lenders, 3 Savile Row, W1.

Eric Reguly on the fast-growing field of information technology

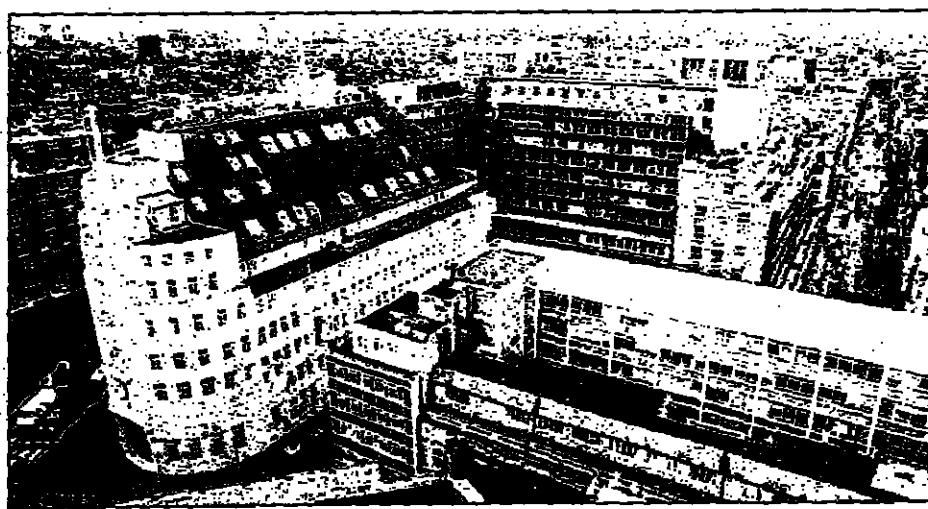
Silent advance of the computer nerd

An American company, Electronic Data Systems — better known as EDS — is infiltrating some of Britain's biggest institutions and industries without causing a ripple. Information technology, its speciality, is an unglamorous world of computer nerds, and contracts worth tens of millions barely rate a press mention.

Yesterday, EDS snagged one of its biggest contracts and one that will affect every household. With Coopers & Lybrand, the management consultancy, it will standardise all of the BBC's financial systems. The ten-year contract is worth between £400 million and £500 million and will eventually see EDS and Coopers employing some 700 BBC back-office staff. The efficiency savings will allow the BBC to spend more money on programming.

The "outsourcing" of information technology, in which a company hands over responsibility for the development and delivery of its information needs, is perhaps the fastest-growing industry in Britain. Richard Holway, an independent IT analyst in Surrey, says the market has been expanding by more than 30 per cent a year in the 1990s. It was valued at £2.3 billion last year and is expected to be worth £4.8 billion or more by 2000.

EDS is the biggest player, with global revenues of \$14.4 billion in 1996, net income of \$1 billion and 100,000 employ-



Broadcasting House in central London, which will feature in the BBC's systems overhaul

ees in 42 countries. In Britain it has almost 10,000 employees, a figure expected to double by 2000.

The company was founded by Ross Perot, the plain-talking Texan whose political ambitions embraced the US Presidential campaigns of 1992 and 1996. He made himself a billionaire when he sold EDS to General Motors in 1984. EDS was spun-off from GM last year, giving it a market capitalisation of \$20 billion, and its shares are listed on the New York and London stock exchanges.

EDS is hardly a household name yet its services permeate society. It collects parking ticket money for the Parking Committee of London and is

developing computer systems for the Inland Revenue's self-assessment system, just one of several Revenue contracts worth £1.6 billion. It provides services to the Metropolitan Police, London Underground, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency and is building information systems for the Royal Navy, Rolls-Royce Aerospace hired EDS to upgrade its customer service, supply, engineering and manufacturing operations.

While outsourcing has become more popular, it is not new. There is absolutely nothing different about outsourcing your information technology needs than outsourcing any other non-core activity like property manage-

ment or cleaning," EDS says. "It allows you to concentrate on what you do best."

The financial reasons are even more compelling. EDS and its rivals argue that, in most cases, they can provide a better service for less money because their employees live and breathe technology and know how to make the most efficient use of it. But the real attraction for a client is budget control. Information technology represents a huge variable cost in any large organisation.

Computer or business system disasters, such as the introduction of new technology that takes months instead of weeks, can bleed a budget dry. Outsourcing transfers the risk to the IT supplier.

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32 UNIT TRUST PRICES

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TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

	1989/87 High	Low Company	Price ¢/lb	%C
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161							

		1974-75	1975-76	1976-77	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83	1983-84	1984-85	1985-86	1986-87	1987-88	1988-89	1989-90	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33	2033-34	2034-35	2035-36	2036-37	2037-38	2038-39	2039-40	2040-41	2041-42	2042-43	2043-44	2044-45	2045-46	2046-47	2047-48	2048-49	2049-50	2050-51	2051-52	2052-53	2053-54	2054-55	2055-56	2056-57	2057-58	2058-59	2059-60	2060-61	2061-62	2062-63	2063-64	2064-65	2065-66	2066-67	2067-68	2068-69	2069-70	2070-71	2071-72	2072-73	2073-74	2074-75	2075-76	2076-77	2077-78	2078-79	2079-80	2080-81	2081-82	2082-83	2083-84	2084-85	2085-86	2086-87	2087-88	2088-89	2089-90	2090-91	2091-92	2092-93	2093-94	2094-95	2095-96	2096-97	2097-98	2098-99	2099-00	2100-01	2101-02	2102-03	2103-04	2104-05	2105-06	2106-07	2107-08	2108-09	2109-10	2110-11	2111-12	2112-13	2113-14	2114-15	2115-16	2116-17	2117-18	2118-19	2119-20	2120-21	2121-22	2122-23	2123-24	2124-25	2125-26	2126-27	2127-28	2128-29	2129-30	2130-31	2131-32	2132-33	2133-34	2134-35	2135-36	2136-37	2137-38	2138-39	2139-40	2140-41	2141-42	2142-43	2143-44	2144-45	2145-46	2146-47	2147-48	2148-49	2149-50	2150-51	2151-52	2152-53	2153-54	2154-55	2155-56	2156-57	2157-58	2158-59	2159-60	2160-61	2161-62	2162-63	2163-64	2164-65	2165-66	2166-67	2167-68	2168-69	2169-70	2170-71	2171-72	2172-73	2173-74	2174-75	2175-76	2176-77	2177-78	2178-79	2179-80	2180-81	2181-82	2182-83	2183-84	2184-85	2185-86	2186-87	2187-88	2188-89	2189-90	2190-91	2191-92	2192-93	2193-94	2194-95	2195-96	2196-97	2197-98	2198-99	2199-00	2200-01	2201-02	2202-03	2203-04	2204-05	2205-06	2206-07	2207-08	2208-09	2209-10	2210-11	2211-12	2212-13	2213-14	2214-15	2215-16	2216-17	2217-18	2218-19	2219-20	2220-21	2221-22	2222-23	2223-24	2224-25	2225-26	2226-27	2227-28	2228-29	2229-30	2230-31	2231-32	2232-33	2233-34	2234-35	2235-36	2236-37	2237-38	2238-39	2239-40	2240-41	2241-42	2242-43	2243-44	2244-45	2245-46	2246-47	2247-48	2248-49	2249-50	2250-51	2251-52	2252-53	2253-54	2254-55	2255-56	2256-57	2257-58	2258-59	2259-60	2260-61	2261-62	2262-63	2263-64	2264-65	2265-66	2266-67	2267-68	2268-69	2269-70	2270-71	2271-72	2272-73	2273-74	2274-75	2275-76	2276-77	2277-78	2278-79	2279-80	2280-81	2281-82	2282-83	2283-84	2284-85	2285-86	2286-87	2287-88	2288-89	2289-90	2290-91	2291-92	2292-93	2293-94	2294-95	2295-96	2296-97	2297-98	2298-99	2299-00	2300-01	2301-02	2302-03	2303-04	2304-05	2305-06	2306-07	2307-08	2308-09	2309-10	2310-11	2311-12	2312-13	2313-14	2314-15	2315-16	2316-17	2317-18	2318-19	2319-20	2320-21	2321-22	2322-23	2323-24	2324-25	2325-26	2326-27	2327-28	2328-29	2329-30	2330-31	2331-32	2332-33	2333-34	2334-35	2335-36	2336-37	2337-38	2338-39	2339-40	2340-41	2341-42	2342-43	2343-44	2344-45	2345-46	2346-47	2347-48	2348-49	2349-50	2350-51	2351-52	2352-53	2353-54	2354-55	2355-56	2356-57	2357-58	2358-59	2359-60	2360-61	2361-62	2362-63	2363-64	2364-65	2365-66	2366-67	2367-68	2368-69	2369-70	2370-71	2371-72	2372-73	2373-74	2374-75	2375-76	2376-77	2377-78	2378-79	2379-80	2380-81	2381-82	2382-83	2383-84	2384-85	2385-86	2386-87	2387-88	2388-89	2389-90	2390-91	2391-92	2392-93	2393-94	2394-95	2395-96	2396-97	2397-98	2398-99	2399-00	2400-01	2401-02	2402-03	2403-04	2404-05	2405-06	2406-07	2407-08	2408-09	2409-10	2410-11	2411-12	2412-13	2413-14	2414-15	2415-16	2416-17	2417-18	2418-19	2419-20	2420-21	2421-22	2422-23	2423-24	2424-25	2425-26	2426-27	2427-28	2428-29	2429-30	2430-31	2431-32	2432-33	2433-34	2434-35	2435-36	2436-37	2437-38	2438-39	2439-40	2440-41	2441-42	2442-43	2443-44	2444-45	2445-46	2446-47	2447-48	2448-49	2449-50	2450-51	2451-52	2452-53	2453-54	2454-55	2455-56	2456-57	2457-58	2458-59	2459-60	2460-61	2461-62	2462-63	2463-64	2464-65	2465-66	2466-67	2467-68	2468-69	2469-70	2470-71	2471-72	2472-73	2473-74	2474-75	2475-76	2476-77	2477-78	2478-79	2479-80	2480-81	2481-82	2482-83	2483-84	2484-85	2485-86	2486-87	2487-88	2488-89	2489-90	2490-91	2491-92	2492-93	2493-94	2494-95	2495-96	2496-97	2497-98	2498-99	2499-00	2500-01	2501-02	2502-03	2503-04	2504-05	2505-06	2506-07	2507-08	2508-09	2509-10	2510-11	2511-12	2512-13	2513-14	2514-15	2515-16	2516-17	2517-18	2518-19	2519-20	2520-21	2521-22	2522-23	2523-24	2524-25	2525-26	2526-27	2527-28	2528-29	2529-30	2530-31	2531-32	2532-33	2533-34	2534-35	2535-36	2536-37	2537-38	2538-39	2539-40	2540-41	2541-42	2542-43	2543-44	2544-45	2545-46	2546-47	2547-48	2548-49	2549-50	2550-51	2551-52	2552-53	2553-54	2554-55	2555-56	2556-57	2557-58	2558-59	2559-60	2560-61	2561-62	2562-63	2563-64	2564-65	2565-66	2566-67	2567-68	2568-69	2569-70	2570-71	2571-72	2572-73	2573-74	2574-75	2575-76	2576-77	2577-78	2578-79	2579-80	2580-81	2581-82	2582-83	2583-84	2584-85	2585-86	2586-87	2587-88	2588-89	2589-90	2590-91	2591-92	2592-93	2593-94	2594-95	2595-96	2596-97	2597-98	2598-9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هكذا من راصل



THEATRE

Kathryn Hunter has always been obsessed with Lear. Now she's the first woman in Britain to play him



FILM

Bernard Levin on surviving the cinematic torture chamber that is Kenneth Branagh's four-hour *Hamlet*

THE TIMES ARTS



CD CHOICE

Building a Library recommends Leonard Bernstein's recording of Mahler's *Das Lied von der Erde*



TOMORROW

Jane Asher stars as the world of journalism comes under the spotlight in Doug Lucie's *The Shallow End*

He'll be out of Scotland afore ye

In the city there are eight million stories. In the countryside there are a whole lot more, each with a throbbing heart big enough to match any urban landscape. For it is stories that fuel the fire of country life — that is country life as in real life, where the nearest mecca is neither Ibiza nor New York. "Not even Aberdeen," as one character puts it in Duncan McLean's new play for the enterprising but resource-strapped Castle-milk People's Theatre.

Blackden
Tron Theatre,
Glasgow

on the community he has left behind.

Community is the key word, for in feeling he has nothing to offer or gain from Blackden, Patrick exposes the divided loyalties of a generation towards what they know as home as well as to what has tempted them away. Away to where, nobody knows, not Patrick's boss, nor Shona, the girl who could have changed his mind if he had only changed hers. His best mate, Brian, could see some unspecified change in Patrick, but only Heather, the hardened Scottish Nationalist, hints at the reasons behind the disappearance.

At first glance, Peter Mackie Burns's production seems starkly untheatrical, yet as the monologues become shorter, accelerating Patrick's impending escape, it becomes clear this is a mystery of epic proportions. Performances are patchy, with only Jennifer Black's Heather having a full sense of controlled stillness. Louise Luggie as Shona and Paul Mutch as Brian are far too prone to pacing, but maybe they, too, are looking for a way out.

The play's nearest relative is Brian Friel's *Faith Healer*, and although lacking that play's precision, this is nevertheless a mild call to wake up, shake up, and get real. For Blackden is no weekend retreat for picnickers. It is for life.

NEIL COOPER

Woman who would be king



Stamina: Kathryn Hunter was on stage throughout in Complicite's *Foe* last year

THEATRE:

Heather Neill meets the actress who is getting ready to make history as a female Lear

Kathryn Hunter has been known to trail old men into Leicester supermarkets. This was during an early phase in her preparation for the role of King Lear when, she confesses, "I felt too small" — she is all of 5ft. "Then, one touch hour, there was a turning point. I saw this old man, about my size, in his eighties, and I followed him into Iceland." She jumps up, diminutive in black, and becomes the old man, walking with measured dignity around the Haymarket Theatre's hospital room. "I thought, if they all parted before him now, he could be Lear." The experience helped her to jettison clichés about the physical expression of power and authority: "The point is, Lear is big in spirit."

Hunter is probably the first woman to play Lear professionally, certainly in this country, although there have been several female Hamlets (including Frances de la Tour in 1979), and Fiona Shaw's boyish Richard II, first seen at the National Theatre, is about to reach the television screen. Sybil Thorndike played the Fool in a production of *Lear* at the Old Vic, and Linda Kerr Scott turned the same role into a display of acrobatics at Stratford in 1990. In John Wood's *Lear*, the title role was not only male and octogenarian, but a symbol of authoritarianism and disappointed fatherhood — isn't this too much of a challenge for a woman still in her thirties?

As she enters the final week of rehearsals, Hunter admits: "Initially I felt panic. There seemed a huge taboo, but it fell away as we rehearsed. To be honest, Lear feels more familiar to me than some female parts. He's not just a great giant of a man, but an expression of the human spirit."

A few minutes in conversation with Hunter and doubts begin to fade. Small she may be and, offstage, definitely feminine, but she has a riveting presence and an extraordinary voice — deep, resonant,

even growly. Anyone who saw her play the cruel, imperious Clara in Complicite's *The Visit* at the National Theatre (for which she won an Olivier Award in 1991) will know that she can dominate a stage with no trouble at all. And in *The Skriker*, Caryl Churchill's shape-changing piece, Hunter effortlessly became a series of different characters, of all ages and both sexes. Her stamina is not in question either: she was on stage throughout for her role as the castaway Susan in Complicite's touring *Foe*, a version of the Marlowe story co-directed by Marcello Magni, who is the Fool in this production.

I was Helena Kaut-Howson, the award-winning Polish-born director, who invited her to play *Lear*. Rehearsals have been going on for a month and, by now, Hunter is seeing Lear's world from his point of view. "He thinks he is a god, but excessive and extreme as he is in this, he is just as ferocious in his quest to understand what is a human being. I admire him because he has the courage to go into the storm. He's a fighter. My feminine sense goes more easily to guilt, to emotional softness; he fights."

"He wants to find out: what is a man? What does a human being need? Does life have any meaning if you break connections with others? He doesn't talk about Cordelia in the storm, but, in experiencing rejection, he

must realise that he also rejected her. You can see his behaviour as arrogance. It's a double thing: grandiose and delusory on one level, but on another, the mark of a huge imagination." Nevertheless, Lear's so-called insight is not, she says, "overwhelmingly new: love is better than hate, human justice is corruptible. "Shakespeare seems to be saying of this world, 'There are no rules, no certainties. There is no security of a Christian salvation.' The play is not about redemption, but about love and, even when it's there, love doesn't secure peace and harmony."

Famous for the physical quality of her acting, Hunter intends to take care not to distract from Shakespeare's language. "I'm playing him as an old man — definitely not Queen Lear — but without overcharacterising age or gender. The language can initially be alienating for the audience, but the images and reverberations are extraordinary."

Kaut-Howson says: "We had to decide what is our way in? We needed a starting-point. It is like a massive stone cut a path in and you reveal things; cut a different one and you reveal others."

There was, in fact, a highly personal and emotional starting-point. The director's mother died about eight months ago. "Her preoccupations were the same as Lear's obsessions: what makes humanity devour itself? What causes wars? She had lived through wars in Europe and the Middle East. At the end she was still herself, as Lear is still himself, only more so."

"Kathryn became a kind of medium. There are few other British, indeed world, actors who can encompass the diversity of notes in *Lear*. There is tragedy and comedy — grotesque, Bosch-like comedy. With Kathryn, drama is always present in her comedy and comedy in her drama."

King *Lear* opens on Friday at the Haymarket, Leicester (0116-253 9997)

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CHANGING TIMES

Hamlet – the bottom line

SECOND OPINION: Four hours in Elsinore leave Bernard Levin numb in the extremes

I have of late — but wherefore I know not — lost all mirth, forgone all custom of exercise, and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory.

The reason is plain to see: I have just sat through four hours and a bit in Stygian darkness, with only one pause for relief (in both senses), and that only 15 minutes long. You ask what torture chamber I have fallen into? I reply, groaning and rubbing my sore bottom — Kenneth Branagh's complete film *Hamlet*. And when I say complete, I mean it (groaning again), for every word of Shakespeare's play is spoken. And what is so groan-making about Shakespeare's glorious words? Nothing, nothing at all. The groaning comes in Branagh's film.

I have no quarrel with the updating: Shakespeare has been played in every time. But Branagh seems to believe that if he hires a couple of hundred famous players and sprinkles them over some monumentally awful scene, he will be in the running for President. And I am hardly joking: to hire such great players as John Gielgud and John Mills, and then give them no words to speak, looks like half-barny childish vanity. And still on the vanity side, Branagh has roped in Richard Attenborough for the minute part of the English Ambassador, for the perfectly ridiculous part of Hecuba. Branagh has called in Judi Dench, no less, also to play a part that has no words to speak: Rosemary Harris, with nothing but the Flayer Queen: Gérard Depardieu as Reynaldo; or... Charlton Heston. Jack Lemmon, Charlie Chaplin, the Prince of Wales, the Sex Pistols, Art Garfunkel, Nigel Dempster, Frank Bruno, O.J. Simpson, all those poor people in Albania who have been swindled, and of course Ned Sherrin. Well, it seemed like it.

But what about my bottom? I was not joking when I said that the four hours of agony I endured were not worth the money, and I got in free. But the first fear came from the very first words of Shakespeare: "Who's there?" and the reply "Nay, answer me

stand and unfold yourself". You and I would expect those familiar words from Bernardo and Francisco, and there they were: but for Branagh it was not enough — he had to have Bernardo and Francisco hurl themselves to the ground, crashing their pikes to the floor in case the enemy (what enemy?) had taken over.

A trifle. But it was also an omen. An omen that told us that we were going to have huge quantities of noise. Noise and heavy breathing, shouting and yelling, smashing the furniture, with hardly a square inch of glass left over, until I thought I would burst, swearing.

Sometimes I thought that

Branagh believed he was on a real stage, and all those people were three-dimensional. Would that they had been. Had nobody told Branagh that Shakespeare does not go well in film? There is something dangerous in the flatness of film Shakespeare, and when it goes on for four hours without a stop — well, my bottom, oh my bottom! (That reminds me. There are three or four flashes of real beautiful nakedness in the film: whether Kate Winslet — she was the Ophelia — did it, or a girl hired for the purpose I do not know. But I wish I did.)

Anyway, even Branagh was from time to time stymied, and had to dance to a tiresome tune. Two or three times, the

screen, and it is a huge screen, was entirely filled by a pair of lips (visitors of a delicate nature, close your eyes) together with teeth, gums and gullets. I never discovered what all that was to mean.

A right summer, then? Not entirely, of course. There were good things too: how could something so enormous not turn out a reasonable quantity of goodies? First, as I think everyone will agree, was the superb Derek Jacobi as Claudius, and running him a close second comes Richard Briers as Polonius. Few Poloniuses can resist the lure of making Polonius far too absurd, but Briers's Polonius is perfectly balanced. Branagh himself was not at all bad, but a man who is trying to make an entire four-hour, every-word play and play in it can hardly scale the heights.

In the end, I gave it my greatest accolade: my bum had stopped aching.

A guide to the best available recordings, presented with Radio 3

MAHLER'S DAS LIEB VON DER ERDE
Reviewed by
Edward Seckerson

Das Lied von der Erde has been described as a "yin-yang symphony", a symphony of songs, a song of two singers and of two cultures. Chinese poetry, Viennese sensibility. But the philosophy of Yin and Yang — negative and positive, dark and light, feminine and masculine — is at the heart of everything Mahler wrote. *Das Lied von der Erde* seeks and finds balance and harmony in contradiction. It's about endings and beginnings, loss and affirmation, decay and renewal, the bitterness of dying, the ecstasy of being alive. Which makes it elusive, now and forever. The tenor role is problematic — particularly in the defiant opening movement "The Drinking Song of Earth's Sorrow" — requiring a lyric voice with weight and reach. A Siegmund as opposed to a Tristan. Except, of



course, that in a recording it is possible to contrive a favourable balance for a lighter than ideal voice. Fritz Wunderlich, in the Klemperer recording on EMI, was just such a voice, and his performance has become something of a benchmark. But glorious though it is, the world weariness and/or irony of the texts somewhat elude him. Not so the wily veteran Julius Pászák in the classic Bruno Walter recording on Decca.

This remains one of the treasures of the gramophone, not least for the presence of Kathleen Ferrier. Just the sound of that voice touches

something deep inside us. Ferrier may not sing it as well as Christa Ludwig for Klemperer (EMI) or Janet Baker for Haitink (Philips) or Leppard (BBC Classics), and she doesn't lay bare the text as does Brigitte Fassbaender for Giulini (DG). But each of these great singers is to some extent compromised by her conductor. Walter, Mahler's disciple, is completely at one with the temperament of the music. Only Leonard Bernstein (Decca 452 301-2, mid-price, £9.99) unlocks its volatility as he does. He, too, has the advantage of Mahler's orchestra, the Vienna Philharmonic, though his preference here is for the baritone option — the poet as opposed to mother earth personified. That Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau gives one of the most illuminating, heartstopping performances of his distinguished career is enough to sway me in Bernstein's favour. But you must have Ferrier too.

To order the recommended recording, with free delivery, please send a cheque payable to The Times Music Shop to FREEPOST, SCO681, Forres, IV36 0BR or phone 0345 023 498; e-mail: music@the-times.co.uk
Next Saturday on Radio 3 (pm): Debussy's Violin Sonata



■ VISUAL ART 1
A new exhibition at the Tate promises to spread the name of Lovis Corinth beyond his native Germany



■ VISUAL ART 2
The National Gallery in Washington celebrates Ford Madox Brown and the Victorians

THE TIMES ARTS



■ VISUAL ART 3
The wild fantasy of Patrick O'Reilly's bizarre machines is showcased in a new London show



■ VISUAL ART 4
... and the glowing and colourful Middle Eastern canvases of Samira Abbassy go on view in Cork Street

VISUAL ART: A German painter who defies categorisation; Victorian art in America; plus other shows

Quick change artist

The Tate's Lovis Corinth show pays overdue tribute to a stubborn individualist, says Richard Cork

When Lovis Corinth suffered a severe stroke in the winter of 1911, his career as a leading German artist seemed to be over. Left with a partial paralysis hampering both his hands, he found himself unable to paint for almost a year. At the age of only 53, the future looked intolerable.

But Corinth was a fighter. Prone to depression and a heavy drinker, he nevertheless forced himself to work. And the style he developed, far wilder and more openly impassioned than before, ensured that his final 14 years were his finest. This plays a decisive part in explaining why Germany now ranks him as an outstanding painter.

In Britain, by contrast, he remains almost unknown. Although London gave the young artist his first significant acclaim when the Royal Academy awarded him a bronze medal in 1894, he has never been granted a substantial exhibition here. So the Tate Gallery's full-scale retrospective, opening on Thursday after a major European and American tour, should prove a landmark event.

Why has he been so neglected? Part of the answer may lie in a long-standing English resistance to German art. Even today the most revered German painters, from Caspar David Friedrich to Max Beckmann, are poorly represented by British galleries. Another stumbling-block may well be the convulsive change which Corinth's art underwent. He spans two centuries, and his early painting could hardly be further removed from the images he produced in audacious old age. His career as a whole lacks an easily graspable identity. Never content to settle for an acceptable formula, he produced an energetic and fiercely ambitious body of work punctuated with surprises.

Just how capable the young Corinth was of painting with academic skill is proved by his first surviving self-portrait in oils. Executed between 1887 and the following year, when he was approaching his thirtieth birthday, it is a small, yet penetrating image. Sporting an extravagant mustache, the correctly dressed artist looks sober and intent. The picture may have been painted in Berlin, where Corinth tried to establish himself, but he had yet to find his individual voice.

His father's death in 1889 assured Corinth of a substantial private income. He settled in Munich, and soon became promi-

nent among the young dissidents. But Corinth's work could not be described as single-minded. He dived, confusingly, from Impressionist-infused views of woodland and the prospect from his studio windows to grand figure compositions spiced with sensuality and satire.

The most prophetic paintings, in terms of his future development, were small canvases based on abattoirs and butchers' shops. Their lack of obvious refinement shocked some viewers; even one supportive critic confessed that "sometimes one is tempted not to look for fear of having to smell what one sees".

For the moment, though, he failed to pursue the implications of painting as a form of slaughter. Maybe he enjoyed himself too much in Munich, frequenting bacchanalian balls and indulging in the raucous drinking that eventually helped to undermine his health.

The painting which really established his reputation, a large composition inspired by Oscar Wilde's notorious play *Salome*, is filled with salacious aggression. While the bare-breasted seductress leans over the Baptist's severed head and pushes his left eye open with a jewelled finger, the leering executioner looks on still clasp his blood-smeared sword. Flagrantly provocative in its splicing of lechery and violence, the picture won Corinth immediate acclaim when he exhibited it in Berlin in 1900. The success persuaded him to move to the city the following year.

Corinth thrived in Berlin, winning critical admiration, selling well and becoming with his new wife a darling of society. So the blow delivered by his stroke in December was doubly devastating. For a prolific artist who had rejoiced in his own inventiveness and dynamic facility, the frustration must have been appalling. Physical debilitation engendered a grave spiritual crisis, and he became haunted by terrible dreams.

When he finally managed to resume painting, the outcome was a monumental, terrifying expression of all his pent-up misery and rage. He called this nightmarish canvas *The Blinded Samson*, but it is in reality an anguished self-portrait. Edging forward with manacled hands, and blood still streaming from his gouged eye-sockets, the helpless figure is forced



"Flagrantly provocative in its splicing of lechery and violence": *Salome, First Version (1899)* was the work that established Lovis Corinth's reputation in Berlin

to stoop and stumble. At the same time, though, Samson's determination should not be underestimated. He is still defiantly set on struggle, not acceptance of defeat. Corinth was equally obstinate. To paint a picture as forceful as *The Blinded Samson* after a year of paralysis was an extraordinary feat. Crude it may have appeared after the virtuosity of his previous work, but the urgently applied brushstrokes have a raw power.

Like many Germans, Corinth greeted the advent of the First World War with patriotic defiance. But only a year later he painted an old man in armour, helmet doffed and leaning heavily on his lance as if exhausted by the conflict already. Even so, he did not allow his country's humiliation to affect his own obstinate ebullience. He and his wife built a house in Upper Bavaria with a view of the waters of

Walchense which prompted the ageing artist to embark on a rapturous series of lakeside images over the next six years.

Despite his love of Rembrandt and Rubens, the old man was reinventing his style with a freshness akin to the Expressionist generation. That is why the Nazis branded him an evil influence. The boldness of Corinth's late paintings was unacceptable to the Fascists, who suppressed many of his major canvases.

Mercifully, the artist himself did not live to suffer from their purges. In 1925 Corinth died of lung inflammation in Amsterdam. But his reputation has continued to grow, and the Tate retrospective will ensure that his stubbornly individual achievement is honoured in Britain at last.

● Lovis Corinth at the Tate Gallery, London SW1 (0171-887 8000) to May 4

■ MUCH of Patrick O'Reilly's new show comes from a showing in Dublin where some of the animated pieces were so enthusiastically set in motion by child visitors that figures have had to be replaced. But there is still a whole lot of shakin' going on. The little figures in glass compartments in *Quiet Desperation* twitch and judder disturbingly, and elsewhere parts start to move when you least expect it. The comments on the human condition have a certain tonic asperity, but like *Gulliver's Travels*, even O'Reilly's nastiest pieces can, looked at with child-like candour, come over as innocent fancies. Mayor Gallery, 22a Cork Street, W1 (0171-734 3558) Mon-Fri 10.30am-5.30pm, Sat 10am-1pm, until March 19.

AROUND THE GALLERIES

■ THE word "colourful" tends to come up a lot in relation to art of vaguely Middle Eastern, vaguely Islamic origin. It is often a tactful way of saying "garish". But Samira Abbassy, Iranian by birth, British by upbringing, and cosmopolitan in experience, has the true colourist's ability to make canvases glow with unexpected and daring harmonies, without settling over-delicate souls aflutter. If you want to be transported to the other side of the rainbow, Abbassy is the painter to do it. Mercury Gallery, 26 Cork Street, W1 (0171-734 7800) Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm, Sat 10am-12.30pm, until March 1.

■ THE Piccadilly Gallery has long been known as a specialist in Symbolist art, so the current exhibition of Belgian Drawings 1880-1930 should come as no surprise. The half-century in question was the heyday of Belgian art, and most of its practitioners were touched by the Symbolist movement. Several of the best-known are featured here, including Ensor, Khnopff, Delvaux and Spilliaert. It is interesting, too, to encounter some later, more modern artists like Maurice Langskens and Anto Carte. Piccadilly Gallery, 16 Cork Street, W1 (0171-629 2875) Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm, Sat 10.30am-1pm, until March 7.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

American home for Victorian values

Cita Stelzer on how Washington is celebrating 19th-century British art

The National Gallery's exhibition of more than 60 Victorian paintings (17 from the Tate) comes at a time when America is in a period of self-congratulatory exuberance — irrational exuberance, according to Federal Reserve Bank chairman Alan Greenspan — that is truly Victorian itself. "Confident, forward looking, expansive" is how the press release from the National Gallery characterises the Victorians; there could be no better description of full-employment America today.

Americans are new admirers of what Gertrude Himmelfarb calls Victorian virtues and Margaret Thatcher came to call Victorian values. Proud of Himmelfarb and others, Americans are coming to see in a rebirth of the virtues of Victorian Britain — hard work, self-reliance, shame, and family — the solution to many of America's social problems.

Ford Madox Brown's great painting, *Work*, on loan from the Manchester City Art Galleries, most unabashedly shows the viewer what it is that the British admired. All of the remembered best of British society is captured in this painting: the self-esteem that

comes from honest, get-your-hands-dirty work; the value of the individual; deep religious convictions (a proper young lady clutching a tract); and even, all for the same price, Thomas Carlyle, looking on with approval. Brown elsewhere refers to Carlyle as the "brainworker", equating the elite intellectual with the navy digging a trench to ensure Hampshire's water supply. All in a single picture.

Social responsibility is also well represented: some of the rich in *Work* are actively holding Temperance pamphlets. Several other paintings in this exhibition attest to the importance to the Victorians of the combination of individual and social responsibility. Herkomer's *Eventide*, painted in 1877 and borrowed from Liverpool's Walker Art Gallery, draws us into a female workhouse where indigent elderly women receive housing and food in exchange for work: call it *Workfare*.

The work is dignified, the atmosphere kind. A group of women gathers in one corner for tea: one looks up from her book to stare peacefully into the distance, it is not straining the analogy to *Workfare* to suggest that Herkomer was



Ford Madox Brown's *Work*, highlight of the show at Washington's National Gallery

depicting a situation in which the safety net was adequate, but not so generous as to encourage permanent reliance on it. Herkomer's bleak interior is not one that encourages the workers to make the workhouse a permanent dwelling.

Among the few portraits is the subtle and mysterious full-length portrait of Carlyle by Whistler (from the Glasgow Museums), Malcolm Warner, the British curator of this

exhibition and curator of paintings and sculpture at the Yale Centre for British Art, says that Carlyle's "religion of work" embodies many of the ideals of Victorian Britain. Carlyle, the catalogue tells us, "tried to salvage the idea of... a social order in the face of the more sceptical, democratic, and materialistic trends of modern British life".

The other portrait of singular interest is of the still-undiscredited, then-Royal

Family by Winterhalter. Like many Victorian pictures, this depiction of the Duke of Wellington (in his grand uniform) presenting a gift to one of Queen Victoria's infant sons combines many elements: importance of the family, the monarchy and the army. Just in case the viewer were to forget the role of progress, one of the central elements of Victorian life, the Crystal Palace, looms in the background. Victorian painting has long

been criticised and ridiculed for being, among other things, moralising in its representations. But these days, at least in Britain and America, morality, individual responsibility, the dignity of work and the virtues of dignified behaviour are all once again in style. Civility is trendy: so, too, is Victorian modesty.

Some of these pictures are moralising: William Holman Hunt's spectacular *Awakening Conscience* probably has had more metaphors read into it than most. But the realism and the morality tales are there to be read by 20th-century viewers, just as they were indeed read by Ruskin, who, in a letter to this newspaper (cited in the catalogue) said: "There will not be found one [painting] as powerful as this to meet full in the front the moral evil of the age."

The mounting of this monumental survey is an indication of the resurgence of interest in things Victorian, even among us colonialists. The exhibition will not travel. So, as President Johnson liked to say, "y'all come". It's easier and probably cheaper to get to Washington to see these treasures than it is to trek around Britain to their widely scattered but properly permanent homes.

● The Victorians — British Painting 1837-1901 is at the National Gallery, Washington DC (202 737 4215) until May 11

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LAW

Frances Gibb on a damages case that illustrates the shortcomings of civil courts



Stan Wells with wife Hilary. "We heard this noise," he recalls. "One of those cranes was practically coming into our bedroom wall"

Little house of horrors

Last week the Lord Chancellor painted a vision of civil justice at the millennium. Legal services in Britain would no longer be dominated by lawyers, or the courts. Instead, a plethora of other providers will enter the market. The insurance industry in particular will assume a key role in widening access to justice, just as is happening in the health service. Market forces, and the private sector, will increasingly determine what legal services are on offer.

The speech by Lord Mackay of Clashfern to the Consumers' Association mapped out the final phases of the revolution he set in train with the Courts and Legal Services Act 1999. That Act ended the legal profession's monopolies and opened up new ways — such as "no win, no fee" work — of legal services being offered. Now, he sees things going further. Lawyers and others offering legal services will be forced to move to a system of fixed prices quoted "up front". The legal establishment had shown a "reluctance, some might say cultural distaste, for dealing openly and frankly with economic incentives". As a result, Lord Mackay said, they had fostered "perverse incentives" which had made civil justice unaffordable.

Now, Lord Mackay favours further moves towards a system of fixed prices. Lord

Woolf's civil justice reforms, with its new "fast track" for claims of up to £10,000, will do this to some extent. Lawyers will have to quote fees in advance and then keep to strict timetables. The Legal Aid Board wants the same approach in big legal-aid civil cases, with lawyers costing each stage of a case.

One result, Lord Mackay predicts, is that fixed pricing will draw in the insurance industry. Insurers could become bulk buyers of lawyers' services on behalf of their

clients, setting quality standards to ensure individuals get a good standard of service. "I see no reason why the private litigant should not enjoy the same relationship with an 'intelligent purchaser' in the private sector," he says. The vision of wider access to justice is welcome. But it looks a long way off compared with the reality of civil justice — or sometimes injustice — today.

The case of Stan and Hilary Wells is a case in point. It is almost ten years since Mr and Mrs Wells awoke to the crashing of a demolition crane at

their home in South Norwood, London. Mr Wells recalls: "We heard this noise and there was one of those cranes practically coming through into our bedroom wall."

The adjoining terraced property had deteriorated and was being pulled down. No prior notice was given by the garage owners whose property it was.

The Wellses found themselves looking through a gaping hole at the side of their house at the demolition workers.

It was the start of a long-drawn-out fight for damages.

The couple were awarded damages of £29,687, but still have not received a single penny

The removal of the adjacent property structurally weakened the Wellses' own home, caused cracking and gradual deterioration, with extensive damage through damp penetration. Now, nine years later, their home is in a very poor state of repair, with extensive damp, peeling and stained wallpaper. The couple took the garage owners to court. They, in turn, lodged actions against architects and engineers they consulted over the demolition. It was not until May 1996 that the Wells case came to court — and only then because it

was separated from the other third-party proceedings, which are still awaiting trial. And even then, the court found that the case was "not well prepared".

Appendments, and last-minute production of expert evidence, meant that the case had to be heard on a number of dates over two months. As a result, judgement was also delayed. As the judge put it, the Wellses had been "failing".

Judge H. M. Crush said: "The failure to identify all areas of expert opinion and to arrange exchange of comprehensive reports well in advance of trial has resulted in a protracted exchange of views expressed largely orally at trial with experts being called to reply."

The Wellses were awarded damages against the defendants of £29,687. That was in May 1996. They have still not received one penny. The defendants appealed and because of the delays, the Wellses were ordered to bear 25 per cent of the costs. Their solicitors, Rowe Radcliffe, have assured them this will not have to come out of their pockets. The firm is sympathetic to the delay as they have suffered. But it points out that had the action not been separated from the allied claims, they might still be waiting for it to be heard.

In the meantime, their damages are being held by the Legal Aid Board (the Wells

were on legal aid) until costs are assessed by the court — a process which can take up to nine months. The couple have no funds in the meantime to repair the house. Mr Wells, who has coronary heart disease, has been forced to give up work as a recruitment manager. Mrs Wells has a clerical job.

"Our house is now unsaleable," he says. "We were forced to cash in our endowment policies and my pension to cover some of the costs earlier on — so instead of being in a reasonable position at our time of life we do not have the financial resources that we had saved and planned for. We are paying a mortgage of £68,000 on a house now worth probably £40,000 to £50,000. And having won our case, we still cannot put our home in good order. What price is English justice?"

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Another fine mess for the Law Society

Tony Girling, the Law Society President, and his associates are now well into the second half of their term of office. Can the establishment repeat the narrow victory achieved by its candidates last year?

Robert Sayer and I will be standing again, and if we can't win this time, we probably can't win at all. The old regime will have shown that despite all the gripings out in the sticks, solicitors are, after all, a conservative bunch and will nearly always opt for the devil they know, whatever his blunderings.

Mr Girling had a difficult hand to play in last summer's election campaign. It was easy enough to bang on about Meers and Sayer as extremists and mavericks. This he and his supporters had been saying from the very start. Many solicitors believed them. Even so, the profession's dislike of Chancery Lane ran so deep that to see the mavericks safely off would take a more inspiring call than "Vote for the old Law Society you know and love. Bring back business as usual".

In the event, the electorate were wooed with the more appealing message. "Buggins is a reformed character. He has learnt his lesson. Trust him again and he will astound you with his deeds." That was the message and it worked.

So what has happened since last July? Is it possible that *Homo Chanceryensis* really has been born again, that those who have toiled so complacently in the great committee mill for so many years have undergone metamorphosis?

Privately, the Bourbons admit that things have not been going well. The Regis computer scandal finally broke in December with the publication of the independent consultants' report. The report presented a devastating picture of mismanagement at the Law Society over a period of years.

Then we had the Solicitors Indemnity Fund (SIF), which within a matter of months twice miscalculated professional indemnity premiums (in the second instance, having to send out a demand for a supplementary contribution). As though this were not enough, the SIF has just announced a further miscalculation. The SIF failed to take sufficient account of the impact of claims arising from conveyancing transactions in the early 1990s and will need to fund these through a hike in premiums that many firms already find crippling.

From the day we joined the Law Society Council, Sayer and I, of course, never stopped complaining that the society was badly managed and was profligate. We kept on saying also that if conveyancers were forced to work at uneconomic rates, they would make mistakes, mistakes for which the whole pro-

lession would eventually pay via the Solicitors Indemnity Fund.

The establishment has reacted predictably to the Regis and SIF debacles. Regis, it is said, was one of yesterday's mistakes, but appropriate lessons have been learnt, etc. etc. So will any of the people involved be disciplined? No, no — that would affect staff morale. What's done is done.

And what about the SIF and the premium increases? Nothing to worry about there, either. The whole matter is being investigated by a committee, which at the time of writing will be made up mainly of present or former directors of the SIF.

Everywhere, indeed, the old habits and the old culture are reasserting themselves. The other day, the council approved the addition of 61 names to the staff head count. Was it only nine months ago that the new Secretary-General was solemnly briefed on the necessity to reduce staff numbers? And then there is the fierce battle being waged over the proposed high street starter kit (one of the "flagship" proposals from Girling's election manifesto). This is a computer package designed for smaller firms and which the Law Society (expert purveyors of IT systems) is trying to create itself. This Son of Regis, it is plain to almost every outside observer, is doomed to failure and to be yet another financial fiasco.

Until the other day, I thought Regis and the rest were mere routine establishment blunders. Now, I begin to think that the Old Guard have a death wish. How else to explain their emasculation of my motion to council that the Law Society, when seeking outside advice, should instruct solicitors rather than trotting off to counsel in its usual fashion? How else does one explain the newly issued "staff guidelines" that would expose junior staff members to "disciplinary sanctions" for giving information of the type that allowed the Regis scandal to see the light of day? How could anyone be so politically crass as to appoint Sayer to the deputy treasurer's post when he was overboard when he began to make waves?

So what will the old 'uns put in their election manifesto? I know. They will tell us what a quiet year it has been: council rallying loyally behind the leadership, no noisy rows, no public denunciations of the current office-holders by their predecessors, the President popping in on the Lord Chancellor, where his representations are heard respectfully and ignored respectfully... business as usual.

● The author is a former president of the Law Society.



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Labour's legal plans

GEORGE STAPLE, the Serious Fraud Office's outgoing director, is being tipped to take over as Treasury Solicitor — and head of the Government Legal Service — a post traditionally held by a member of the Bar.

It became vacant after the sudden death of Michael Saunders. Labour, meanwhile, is having problems over who might fill its own law-officer posts if it wins power. Again by convention, the post goes to a barrister. The obvious candidate for Attorney-General is the shadow, John Morris, QC. But what of Solicitor-General? Lord Wilkins of Mostyn would be a good choice but for his pension. Labour might have to break with tradition and appoint from the upper house.

Settled

MORE THAN half the Bristol & West conveyancing claims against law firms listed for a group hearing at the High Court next week have now settled, according to the Law Society Gazette. Of 85 cases brought by the society against the Solicitors Indem-

nity Fund, only 35 remain.

The claims arose against solicitors who acted for the society as well as for buyers during the property boom. When the market collapsed, the society had to repossess many properties. The society alleges conveyancing errors and also says law firms should have warned it of any prospective bad risks.

Catty

THE LENGTHS to which clients will go to signal their approval of a law firm's image revamp are quite remarkable. Sue Silvey, Os-



borne Clarke's marketing manager, tells in *Professional Marketing* magazine of a near-hysterical reaction to the firm's decision to change its corporate identity by creating a sleek big-cat logo.

She writes: "Many clients wrote congratulatory letters including puns which alluded to 'purified vision', 'catatonic', 'cat-chy' and 'fat cats'. Tins of cat food arrived from one contact and fake leopard skin material from another."

Timeshare help

SWIFT JUSTICE from the National Solicitors Network.

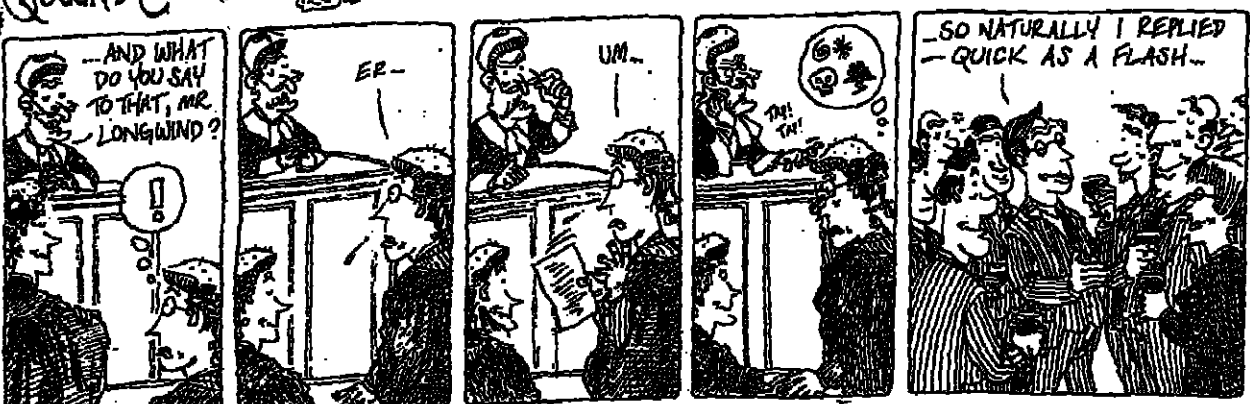
Hamming it up

KENNETH BRANAGH, the star of his own new film production of *Hamlet* (left) has a surprise rival. Simon Tracey, a barrister who is also an Equity member, will play the prince in a Bar Theatrical Society version featuring judges, barristers and legal trainees at the Old Hall, Lincoln's Inn, until Saturday, at 7.30pm. Details: Tara McCarthy on 0171-837 8724.

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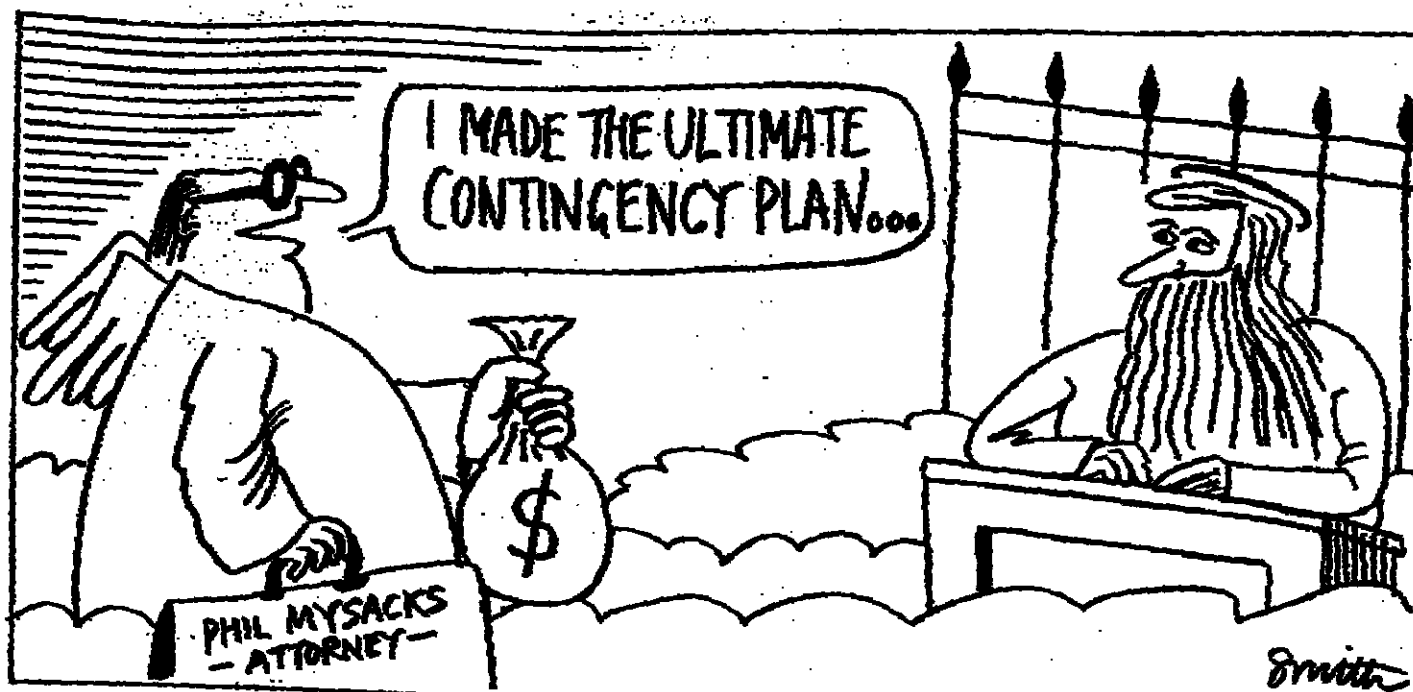
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The multimillion fees

James D. Zirin reports on America's extraordinary contingency payouts

A recent survey of in-house lawyers at 300 large companies in America revealed that 58 per cent of all respondents thought corporate lawyers are not worth the fees they charge. More than 60 per cent said that large firms are not becoming more cost-competitive, despite pressures to do so.

When corporations face multimillion-dollar actions under the federal securities laws or product liability claims, they are usually represented by large law firms that charge by the hour — win, lose or draw. The cases are usually brought by highly aggressive plaintiffs' lawyers, used to winning large jury verdicts in such cases, who earn their fees on a different basis — plaintiffs' lawyers usually have contingency fee arrangements.

With a contingency fee, there is no charge to the client if the case is lost, but if there is a recovery, through a settlement or verdict, the lawyer's fee is based on a part — typically a third — of the recovery. So the payoff can be enormous. Courts are starting to wonder whether contingency fee lawyers are worth the money they charge because judges are the only regulators on a practice that is open to criticism.

When, for example, George Fleming, a Houston trial lawyer, asked the court for \$108.9 million (about \$66 million) in fees and disbursements out of the \$170 million in cash he obtained in

settlement of a leaky pipe case brought by 37,000 homeowners against Shell Oil, Hoechst Celanese and DuPont, the Texas judge could not find enough words to express his displeasure. Mr Fleming had based his fee application on 40 per cent of the cash recovery and 40 per cent of the discounted value of the new plumbing that defendants promised to install as part of the settlement. The result was a fee request amounting to more than 64 per cent of the cash portion of the settlement package. By contrast, lawyers who settled a related cash action for \$950 million on behalf of 73,000 homeowners were awarded \$83 million in fees and expenses. The fee figure amounted to 8 per cent of the cash.

Contingency fee lawyers make serious money in Texas. Five of the seven highest-paid trial lawyers in the nation practice in Texas. Joseph Jarnal, one of the industry leaders, is best remembered for collecting \$10.7 billion for Pennzoil in its 1987 battle with Texaco. Mr Jarnal may have earned \$90 million last year.

America did not always have contingency fees. Under early English and Roman law, barristers were forbidden to be paid but could

accept donations. Contingency fees were strictly forbidden because of common law sanctions against the criminal act of champerty, once considered the foulest practice known to the law.

The concept, originally applied both to lawyers and non-lawyers, is the sale of an interest in a litigation to a purchaser who undertakes to carry on the battle at his risk and expense in return for a share of the proceeds — the very soul of a contingency fee arrangement.

In America, lawyers' fees were fixed by statute until 1848, when procedural codification decided that compensation was by agreement with the client, unless restrained by law. This was interpreted to exempt lawyers from champerty and laid the foundation for contingency fees at first in personal injury and then in other forms of litigation.

Though most countries in the world, including England, usually regard contingency fees as unethical, the arrangement has become a permanent feature of America's legal landscape. Its proponents claim that it is the only way that a poor person with a meritorious claim can afford a lawyer and gain access to the courts. The American system traditionally has championed the rights of the underdog.

But the results have not always been satisfactory. In certain kinds of litigation, where there may be a special need to protect the interests of beneficiaries, courts have sought to evolve criteria for regulating the size of contingency fees. These have included an evaluation of the difficulty involved in producing the recovery, the stature of the attorney, the time spent as evidenced by contemporaneous records and the percentage of the recovery represented by the fee.

In most cases, however, judges usually do not question contingency fees because they are a matter of private agreement between attorney and client.

Now there is a fashion for close scrutiny of what lawyers do, particularly of how they devise their fee structures. The real issue is not contingency fees themselves but the ethical and economic aspects of lawyers, who owe their clients an obligation of the utmost good faith, setting fees based solely on risk sharing or time spent without regard to utility to the client when other alternatives may be available. After all, litigation is supposed to be for the benefit of the litigants, as well as the community at large, not the intermediaries.

The author, a trial lawyer, is a senior partner in Brown & Wood, a New York law firm.

French promise true justice

French justice is in crisis. Corruption scandals, political interference, underfunding and inefficiency have combined to sap confidence in a system that dates back to the French Revolution in 1789.

It was for this reason that President Jacques Chirac decided to launch a sweeping review of France's criminal and civil courts last week, and to underline the importance of his decision he announced his plans in a televised speech. During his 20 months in office, he has made one other similar broadcast only, and that was when he announced he was ending national service.

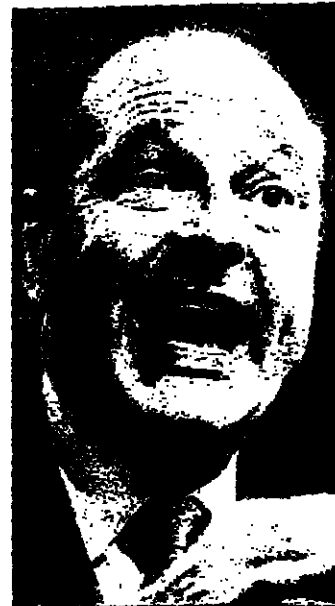
"The time has come," he said, "to fix a great ambition for our justice, to re-establish the principles on which it rests and modernise its structure, and to adapt the system for our times." The words may have sounded grandiose, but M Chirac knew that he had to calm public anger over a system that is often seen as partisan and incompetent.

At the heart of his anger is the political sleaze that over the past few years has affected both the Socialists when they were in power and more recently the centre-right parties which have been in power since 1993.

Both the left-wing and the right-wing parties have tried to stop or to slow down investigations into political corruption by putting pressure on France's state prosecutors, whose role is to initiate criminal inquiries, which are then taken over by investigating magistrates with the help of the police.

Under the Socialist Government, the Ministry of Justice rode roughshod over supposed judicial independence and ordered the country's state prosecutors not to act on embarrassing information. The right-wing Gaullists have been more subtle, nominating prosecutors who share their political views and promoting others who are seen as obedient to the Government. The result, however, is the same. M Chirac said: "Suspensions remain about the independence of magistrates with regard to the political authorities."

His response was to set up the French equivalent of a Royal Commission — a 21-member Commission of Reflection on Justice — composed not only of lawyers and



Chirac set up a sweeping review of all that is unjust

Action is to be taken to make France's legal system efficient and just, says Adam Sage

judges but also of journalists, academics and philosophers. It has been charged with suggesting ways of reinforcing judicial independence.

Observers believe that it will call for an end to the Justice Ministry's role in nominating state prosecutors and for a new law preventing the Government from telling prosecutors when — and when not — to launch inquiries.

The commission has also been instructed to indicate ways of "reinforcing the presumption of innocence". With no contempt of court law in France, newspapers are free to report on criminal investigations and cases, detailing the prosecution argument against a defendant. As the only constraint faced by journalists is the risk of a subsequent libel action, suspects are often portrayed as guilty long

before they appear before a judge and jury.

M Chirac's announcement, however, has met a mixed reaction. While most observers recognise the need to protect the innocent, many fear the introduction of a new offence of contempt of court. Catherine Vannier, Vice-President of the left-leaning Magistrates' Union, says: "This could be used to stop the media talking about corruption affairs. We have to be vigilant."

While the commission examines these "issues of principle", the Government, M Chirac said, will consider how to make French criminal and civil justice more efficient and more accessible. On television, he said: "A large number of you find the system too slow, sometimes too expensive and, in fact, incomprehensible."

With people on average incomes unable to claim legal aid, and long delays before even simple cases are heard, practical difficulties have contributed to the lack of confidence in French justice.

Recent figures show that civil disputes costing less than Fr30,000 (about £3,250) take about five months to come to court, and people accused of serious offences have to wait more than three years to be judged. French courts have been condemned 14 times by the European Court of Human Rights for failure to give judgment within "a reasonable" time.

Mme Vannier says: "The problem is that there are too few magistrates. At the beginning of the century, there were 6,300; now there are 6,000. Meanwhile, the number of cases they deal with has grown out of all proportion."

M Chirac said he wanted to improve "the way justice functions" by introducing new technology, enhancing judicial training and extending the use of conciliation to prevent cases coming to court. The Justice Ministry's annual budget, which stands at Fr23.9 billion this year, will be increased. "Today," he said, "we have to build a good justice system, an uncontested justice system and a serene and respected one."

Such promises have made in France before. But never by a head of State before a national television audience. This time, they might just be fulfilled.

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MEDIA
This top 10 City firm is a place to build your reputation, your bank balance and your partnership prospects. It really is a superb progression for media lawyers with 2+ years' exp from good backgrounds who want to work on some of the most high-profile matters around. You can also expect quality training. Ref: T7794.

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Over-prepared

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Michael Chambers

INDUSTRY

Legal & Business Affairs Exec: Geneva

Lawyer with 2-3 years' exp to join int'l media organisation & to assist with co-production agreements, agency rights, acquisitions, technical & telecommunications contracts. Must be reasonably fluent in French.

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Financial institution seeks assistance with a heavy workload in their Fund Management Division. Candidates must have good pension fund knowledge. Contract will be for 6 months and is to assist with a heavy workload. Ref: 36924

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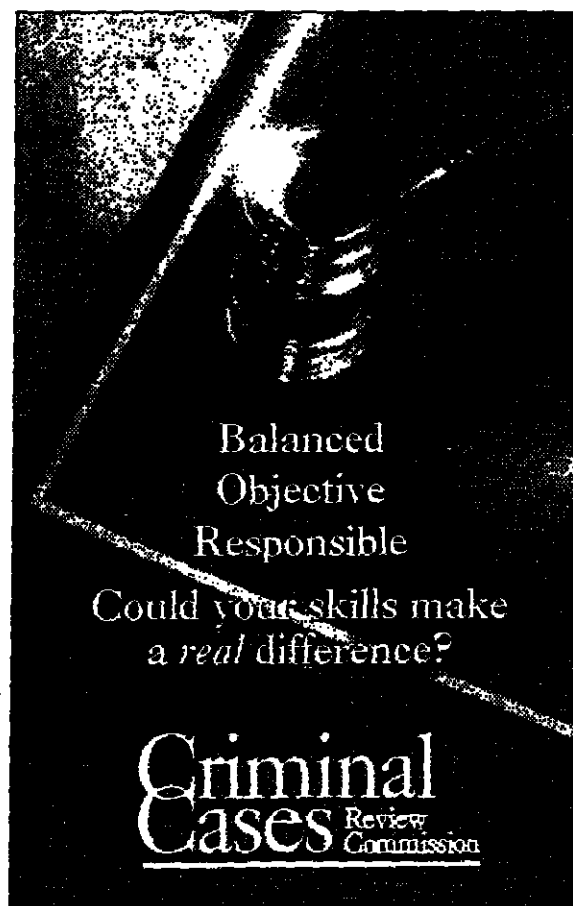
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Overseas View

strengths here that the majority of players come from the lower leagues. That creates a common bond between us. There is a strong feeling for the club, too. It's almost as if you get a piece of the club and take it out on the field with you."

Tonight, Wimbledon and Earle will have the unusual honour of being the favourites. Earlier in the season Leicester outstuffed the husters in the Premiership, a snub not forgotten. Wimbledon will be ready this time. A Wembley final beckons for Earle. Maybe two, and an England cap. "I feel I've been playing catch-up in my career," he said. The gap is closing fast.

Closer to home, in France—which is still deliberating on a request by Fifa, football's world governing body, to remove security fences for the 1998 World Cup—a linesman was hurt by a bottle thrown from the crowd at Parc des Princes, where Paris Saint-Germain played last Friday.

knife'

Hiddink is concerned for the future of his national team. His familiar refrain is that the Dutch, like so many, find it cost efficient to trawl Africa for talent, to import those who come cheapest and whose skills are more readily available.

Belgium: Lokonda, at 18 the younger of the two forwards, was in Leekens's full international squad for the game against Northern Ireland in Belfast last week. Italian clubs are watching them keenly.

RUGBY UNION

Tour match
Harlequins v Aucland (3.0)

Courage Clubs Championship
First division

championships: Paul Lloyd (Liverpool, holder) v Lybio Nkoko (SA) (at Grundy Park Leisure Centre, Chesham).

ICE HOCKEY: Superleague: Nottingham v Braconell (7.30).

SNOOKER: International Open (in Aberdeen).

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Double threat to McColgan

By DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

won in New York last year in a personal best of 2:28.18, won the World Cup in 1995 and was runner-up in the world championships in the same year.

In Vienna, at the weekend, Jo Wise displaced Mary Rand as No 3 in the all-time British indoor long jump rankings.

Wise jumped 6.57 metres and is close to the British record of 6.70, set by Sue Telfer in 1984.

Wise produced the big jump when she needed it because, although she had won the British trial for the world indoor championships next month, she did not have the qualifying mark and the team is selected on Sunday night.

FOOTBALL

FOOTBALL
Kick-off 7.30 unless stated

Coca-Cola Cup
Semi-final, first leg
Luton v Wrexham (7.45)

Nationwide League
Second division
Chesham v Rotherham (7.45)

Third division
Rochdale v Hereford
Rushmore v Chester
Torquay v Mansfield

Auto Windscreens Shield
Semi-finals
Northern section
Weymouth v Curle
Southern section
Colchester v Northampton (7.45)
Watford v Peterborough (7.45)

Vauxhall Conference
Kettering v Farnborough (7.45)
Weymouth v Luton (7.45)

Bell's Scottish League
Premier division
Rath v Motherwell

Second division
Clyde v Dunbarton

Third division
Alloa v Inverness CT
Greenock v Albion

Tenants Scottish Cup
Fourth round replay
Dundee v Greenock Morton

ANDREW BICHEL produced a five-wicket haul as Australia beat Western Province by 32 runs at Newlands in Cape Town yesterday, the opening first-class fixture of their cricket tour of South Africa.

Bichel, 26, broke the back of a spirited Western Province run-chase with five for 62 as the home side was bowled out for 321 after Australia had set them 353 runs to win in a *minimum* of 81 overs. Western Province collapsed from 224-4 to leave their last six wickets for 68.

GOLF: Colin Montgomerie will tune up for the Open at Royal Troon by playing in the Loch Lomond World Invitational from July 9-12. The field includes Nick Faldo, Tom Lehman and Ernie Els.

BOXING: Herol Graham, 37, the former world middle-weight title contender, from Sheffield, will appear in his first contest in London for over three years when he faces an as-yet unnamed opponent at the Elephant and Castle Leisure Centre on March 4.

TENNIS: Shiri-Aron Suddall, of Dorset, the winner of the women's satellite tournament in Birmingham last year, has joined Louise Latham, the national junior champion, from Warwickshire, as British qualifiers for the Challenger event, which starts at Redbridge today.

Second division
Cheshamfield v Rotham (7.45)

Third division
Aldershot v Weymouth
Southport v Chester
Torquay v Mansfield

Auto Windermere Shield
Semi-finals

Northern section
Stranraer v Carlisle

Southern section
Colchester v Northampton (7.45)
Barnet v Luton (7.45)
Vauxhall Comets
Kettering v Farnborough (7.45)
Doncaster v Welling (7.45)

Bever's Scottish League

Fourth division
Rath v Motherwell

Second division
Clyde v Dumbarton

Third division
Alloa v Inverness CT
Aberystwyth v Arbroath

Tennants Scottish Cup
Fourth round replay
Dunfermline v Greenock Morton

[illegible][illegible]

NORTHERN COUNTIES EAST LEAGUE
Premier division: Ayr v Haddington
Midland v Haddington; Aberdeen v Inverness
Town. President's Cup: Strathgordon v
Haddington.
SCHOOL MATCHES: Ayr Premier
League Under-16 Trophy: Bunkingburn
v Strathgordon.
London Cup: Strathgordon v Norfolk at
2.30 p.m.
Rugby Cup: Westall v Kirby at
Knoxley, 4.30.

RUGBY UNION

Town match:
Harlequins v Auckland (3.0)

Courage Clubs Championship
Final division
Strathgordon v Gloucester (7.30)

CLUB MATCHES: Cambridge University
Army (7.15); Edinburgh v Royal Scots
(6.0).

OTHER SPORT

BASKETBALL: Buchaner League: New
market v Dalry (7.30).
BOATING: "Carnegie" bantamweight
championship; Paul Lloyd (Lough
borough) v John McEwen (Glasgow)
Ladies' County, Chester.

ICE HOCKEY: Superleague: Nottingham
Panthers v Newcastle Falcons.

SNOOKER: International Open (8.0)

POLE

17

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PRIMARK the new benchmark

England captain achieves double half-century for fifth time in Tests

Atherton leaves lasting impression

FROM ALAN LES
CRICKET CORRESPONDENT
IN CHRISTCHURCH

CHRISTCHURCH (fourth day of five): England, with eight second-innings wickets in hand, need 187 runs to beat New Zealand

A SHREWD captain is always prepared to use the scorn of the opposition for inspiration and Michael Atherton was presented with just such an opportunity when he wandered into the press conference area at Lancaster Park on Sunday evening a few minutes early for an interview.

Atherton was in time to overhear Steve Rixon, the New Zealand coach, giving a jaundiced view of England's prospects in this final Test. "They haven't coped well with pressure in the past," Rixon said, with the hint of a sneer, "and I can't see why they should start now."

This brought a frown to the face of the England captain, but he will doubtless have stored away the insult for some timely motivation in the dressing-room. The moment to dispute Rixon's judgment is nigh, for England were today challenging cricketing precedent by pursuing a fourth-innings target of 305, and Atherton knew that the lasting perceptions of an entire winter's effort depended upon them succeeding.

Inevitably, it was Atherton himself who sustained their hopes into the final day, playing with the poise of one who has rediscovered his form and the obstinacy of one who never lost his spirit. By the close yesterday, he had batted for almost ten hours without being out, an outstanding achievement, and had been on the field for the entire four days. It is also the fifth time he has scored half-centuries in each innings of a Test.

Only once have England scored more than 300 to win a Test and that was 68 years ago, in Melbourne. This time, they had in their favour an equation requiring them to make only 60 runs a session and a pitch still basically benign. Against them were ranged the mental stresses of such an assignment and a precocious teenage spin bowler.

Daniel Vettori is a stranger



Stewart reels after being hit between the eyes by a delivery from Vettori that reared out of the leg-side rough. Photograph: Simon Baker

to the sporting peaks but one would never know it. His response to being thrust into Test cricket straight from school has been to bat and bowl as if born to the part. Here, entrusted with responsibilities under which many more experienced bowlers would have wilted, he performed with skill, stamina and patience. "I once bowled 52 overs straight off in a school game," he said, "but this was a bit different."

Almost all of his 23 unchanged overs were bowled from over the wicket into the leg-stump rough, from which the ball was liable to bounce

awkwardly. It is a dubious tactic, an abuse of the way the game was intended to be played, but it remains a legitimate option and Vettori explored it avidly, forcing England into retreat and taking the psychologically significant wicket of Alec Stewart 20 minutes from the close.

Later, hustled from one television crew to another like a man who has just taken ten wickets, rather than two, Vettori looked the boy he is — an earnest, self-conscious 18-year-old with unruly hair, a bespectacled boffin — rather than the man he had become out in the middle.

This has been a curious Test match, always absorbing and eventually gripping, yet containing a great deal of modest cricket. Much of it has been played by England, so the fact that they were able to enter the final day with a winning chance said much for their powers of recovery and more than a little about the standard of the opposition.

New Zealand should have made the match safe with a bigger second-innings score. As it was, their early batsmen were flustered by two spin bowlers operating with predatory fields and it was left to Chris Cairns and Vettori to

carry England's target into intimidating areas. Their eighth-wicket stand put on 71 in even time and the longer Vettori practised his nervous defence, the more expansively did Cairns respond. Cairns should have been stamped off by Croft when 31 and caught by Cork off Gough when 51 but, by the time he finally offered Nick Knight his fourth catch of the innings, the game had once more been dragged away from England's clutches.

Vettori, whose only dismissal in four Test innings has been a run-out in which he was blameless, batted 103 minutes for 29 precious runs and Gough's rapid capture of the last two wickets did not alter the fact that New Zealand had become firm favourites.

England, who could not afford early casualties, were encouraged by their first half-century opening stand of the winter Tests. This is a damning statistic but it was an appropriate moment to curtail the run, even if Knight offered no evidence that his technical problems are over.

Instead, it was Atherton

who played positively from the outset, punishing the quicker bowlers whenever they dropped short as 41 runs came from the first 13 overs. Five successive maidens followed but two fours from Atherton had set England moving again when Knight, fired down the pitch by Vettori, mis-hit a drive to mid-on.

Stewart has not had a poor match for almost a year but, after a cavalier first innings and a wicketkeeping miss, this was threatening to be one as he fretted ineptly against Vettori. Stewart likes to begin an innings with the ball coming onto the bat and Vettori frustrated him almost to distraction.

Somewhat, he clung on for almost two hours, facing 108 balls and scoring from only nine of them. He had been struck between the eyes by a freakish ball from Vettori that reared out of the footmarks and he had given a half-century to slip off Simon Doull. Ironically, he was out to the first ball that Vettori bowled at him from round the wicket, confused by the altered angle and taken at short leg off bat and pad.

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 348 (S P Fleming 82, A C Peters 50, C L Cairns 57, R D B Croft 5 for 95)	
Second innings	
B A Pocock b Cork	0
B A Young c Knight b Tufnell	49
JA C Peters c Stewart b Gough	8
*S P Fleming c Knight b Tufnell	11
CL Cairns c Knight b Tufnell	52
CL Cairns c Knight b Tufnell	52
S B Doull c Knight b Croft	5
M J Horne c Stewart b Croft	13
D L Tuffnell not out	29
HT Davis b Gough	1
GI Watkin c Stewart b Gough	1
Extras (b 4, nb 4)	12
Total (88.3 overs, 322min)	186
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-0 (Young 30, 4-76 (Young 49, 5-80 (Cairns 5), 6-89 (Cairns 5), 7-102 (Cairns 8), 8-176 (Cairns 29), 9-184 (Watkin 29))	
BOWLING: Croft 8-2-5-1 (one appt); Dadd 10-1-25-1 (nb 2); 1-10; 3-4-0-15; 3-15-0-2-1; 5-10; 4-14-0-10-9-2-7-21-0; 4-2-0-0; Gough 13-5-45-3 (8 balls; 5-2-10-1; 8-5-22-2; Tuffnell 28-4-58-9 (nb 3, 6; 4-10; 26-9-52-2, 2-0-6-1)	
SCORING NOTES: Fourth day: Lunch taken at end of innings.	
ENGLAND: First innings 228 (M A Atherton 94 not out; G I Abbott 4 for 74)	
Second innings	
N V Knight c Davis b Vettori	29
*M A Atherton not out	85
JA J Stewart c Pocock b Vettori	17
A R Caddick not out	0
Extras (b 1, lb 4, w 1, nb 1)	7
Total (2 wds, 62 overs, 240min)	118
FALL OF WICKETS: 1-44 (Atherton 29), 2-116 (Atherton 85)	
BOWLING: Abbott 5-2-4-0 (w 1; one appt); Davis 8-2-22-0 (4 balls; 2-0-11-0, 2-0-11-0; 18-5-38-0 (3 balls; 4-20-0, 5-2-0-0); Vettori 25-5-32-2 (1 ball; one appt); Cairns 4-0-12-0 (nb 1; one appt); Aisle 12-7-10-4 (2 balls; one appt)	
SCORING NOTES: Fourth day: Test 71-1 (29 overs, 122min; Atherton 35, Stewart 1)	
Umpires: R S Dunn and D B Har (Australia). Third umpire: D M Quistad. Match referee: P J P Borge (Australia).	
SERIES DETAILS: First Test (Auckland): Match drawn. Second Test (Wellington): England won by an innings and 66 runs.	
Compiled by Bill Friswell	

Answers from page 45

SERUM

(c) The fatty secretion which lubricates the hair and the skin. A modern Latin use of the Latin *serbum* or *serum* sweat, grease. "The serum frequently accumulates in the sebaceous ducts, giving rise to the minute black points to which the term comedones is applied."

SMOLT

(b) Of weather, fair, fine, calm, of the sort that has Mr Fish playing with little cut-outs of sunrays on television while becoming fabulously "Minnie Madkins, think not lunge! The weather is fair and smolt."

SANDYX

(a) A red pigment, mentioned by ancient writers. The Greek and the Latin word for this mysterious dye, Oscar Wilde, *Intentions*, 1891: "On the wall of fresh plaster, stained with bright sandyx."

SOBERSAULT

(c) An older and correct variant of *somersault*. Into Romance languages from the Latin *supra* above + *saltare* a leap. Fletcher, *Woman's Prize*, 1625: "What a sobersault when the chaire fell she fetched, with her heels upward."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

Black cannot play 1... Rxb6 because of 2 Qxb6 but 1... Rb6 (the safest square for the rook) leaves White's bishop on c6 stranded.

A twisted look at literature

Booked! Radio 4, 12.25pm.

Radio 4 has a deserved reputation for finding quiz formats that knock the most television equivalents into a cocked hat, though nobody at the network has ever satisfactorily replied to the question: Why was *Round Britain Quiz* dropped? Perhaps lighter fare, of which *Booked!* is one of the best examples, is now the preferred option. *Booked!* returns for another series and its witty slant on literary and cultural territory, in which panellists are asked to imagine writers on unfamiliar territory, D. H. Lawrence contributing to the gardening pages of *Radio Times*, Ted Hughes writing a cornflakes commercial. With Roger McGough, Mark Thomas, Miles Kingston and Dillie Keane.

The Prohibition Years. Radio 2, 10.00pm.

There may not be much new to say about this turbulent period in American social history, but the success of this new series is in the way it is said and the approach that it takes. The title is more a reference to the era than prohibition as such, though the official ban on alcohol and the way it was circumvented obviously offers a key thread. The presenter, George Melly, looks at the huge technological advances made in the 1920s, which led among other things to talking pictures. Melly's is one of the great radio voices but less familiar ones, including Al Capone's former piano player, contribute colourful anecdotes to the series.

Peter Barnard

RADIO 1

7.00am Mark Radcliffe 8.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Jo Whiley. Includes at 12.30pm Newsbeat 2.00 Moby Campbell 4.00 Kavin Greasing includes at 5.15 Newsbeat 6.30 Evening Session with Steve Lamacq 8.30 John Peel 10.30 Mary Ann Hobbs 1.00am Claire Sugden 4.00 Chris Wain

RADIO 2

8.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 White Up To Women 8.30 Ken Bruce 11.30 Anne Robinson 1.30pm Debbie Thorne 3.00 Ed Stewart 5.00 John Dunn 7.00 Hayes over Britain 8.30 A Town Like Alice 12.00 Shute's classic life described by Moya Shew. With Bernard Hopton and Virginia McKenna (5/6) 8.00 King of the Cheesecake. Tribute to 60s legend Henry Youngman, best of the great New York stand-up comedians who is still performing at the age of 90 10.00 The Prohibition Years. See Choice (1/2) 10.30 The Jazzmen 12.00am Steve Madden 3.00 Alex Lester

RADIO 5 LIVE

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 The Breakfast Programme, includes Racing Preview 9.00 The Magazine 12.00 Midday with Mel 2.00pm Ruocco on Five 4.00 John Inverdale Nationwide 7.00 News Extra 7.30 The Tuesday Morning News 8.00am News 9.00am News 10.00am News 11.00am News 12.00pm News 1.00pm News 2.00pm News 3.00pm News 4.00pm News 5.00pm News 6.00pm News 7.00pm News 8.00pm News 9.00pm News 10.00pm News 11.00pm News 12.00am News

TALK RADIO

5.00am Chris Aschey and Sandy War 7.00 Paul Ross 8.00 Scott Chisholm 12.00pm Lorraine Kelly 2.00pm Tony Boyd 4.00pm Peter Dinkley 7.00pm The Sportszone 10.00pm James White 1.00am Ian Collins

RADIO 3

8.00am On Air, with Andrew McGregor. Includes Schumann (Symphony No 1 in B flat); Handel (Music for the Royal Fireworks); Goethe (Korntalbach in D); Wagner (Overture: The Flying Dutchman); Mozart (Piano Concerto No 23 in A) 9.00 Morning Collection, with Peter Hobbay. Includes Mozart (Church Sonatas in C); Tchaikovsky (Sofia Barasque); Chopin (Two Nocturnes); Bach (Cantata No 211) 10.00 Musical Encounters. Introduced by Mary Miller. Includes Rabelais (Le cahier); Liszt (Pavane for the Dead); Schubert (Piano Sonata in A); Bach (Orchestral Suite No 2 in B minor); Debussy (L'Après-midi d'un Faune); Mozart (Vespers for the dead) 12.00 Composers of the Week: Pfitzner 1.00pm Ulster Orchestra, under Warwick Stanger. With Frederick Kottel, piano, and Stephen Farr, organ. Massenet (Ballet music: Le clo; Schumann (Piano Concerto in A minor); Vidor (Symphony No 3 in E minor) 2.30 Ensemble. Another chance to hear Paddy Gore introduce a programme of Russian music for two pianos played by Claire and Antonietta Carr, Anetia (Suite No 2, Schostakovich); Liszt (Piano Sonata No 1) (1) 3.15 The BBC Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Jean-Yves Ocasio. With Stephen Coombe, piano. Fauré (Mazurka for piano); Massenet (Piano Concerto in E flat) 10.45 Night Waves. Tony Palmer presents a look at the recent film in popularity of musical films 11.30 Composer of the Week: Schumann (1) 12.30am Jazz Notes, with Digby Fairweather 1.00am Through the Night, with John Shea

RADIO 4

5.55am Shipping (LW) 6.00 News 6.10 Farming Today 6.20 News for the Day 6.30 Today, includes Thought for the Day 6.40 Yesterday in Parliament 9.00 News 9.05 Call Nick Ross 10.00 News: A Funny Day Down the Doot Valley (FM). Sheffield comedian and actor Bobby Knutt offers a view of the city's life 10.00 News Service (LW) 10.15 On This Day (LW) 10.30 Woman's Hour, with Jenni Murray 11.30 Medicine Now, with Geoff Watts 12.00 News: You and Yours, with Lesley Riddoch 12.25pm Booked! See Choice 1.00 The World at One, with Nick Chester 1.40 The Archers (1) 1.55 Shipping 2.00 News: Classic Storylines. Peggy Reynolds looks at The Turn of the Screw by Henry James and its effect on popular culture (1) 2.30 Book 1: Know What I Like, the second in the series in which the pianist David Owen Norris talks to and accompanies leading authors. Today's guest is the dramatist Ben Jonsson (2/3) 3.00 The Afternoon Shift, with Dore Brian 4.00 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope. Paul Vaughan talks to Juliette Walters about her new novel The Echo 4.45 Short Story: Love of Fat Men, by Helen Dunmore. Read by Saskia Reeves 5.00 PM 5.50 Shipping Forecast 5.55 Weather

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.8-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 80.2-80.8. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.8. LW 12.30-12.45. LW 12.45-12.55. CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8. MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1003, 1080. Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear. Ian Hughes, Radio City Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McManus.

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The chronologist will see you now, Mr Lost

Call me old-fashioned, but I like a good story. Call me hopelessly in thrall to outmoded dramatic techniques that are a laughing stock wherever trends gather, but I enjoy a story where the scene before me now is not taking place at some point in time earlier than the scene that came before it, to be followed by a scene from the future that precedes one from the past, but is not as far in the past as the one I was watching before the one that takes place in the future.

There you are, you see: completely lost already and paragraph two barely out of the starting stalls. What kind of mess shall we be in 959 words hence?

The trouble is that I have just watched 80 minutes of *Hero of the People* (BBC2) and little captions are still dancing before my eyes: Montreal 1924; China 1938; Montreal 1928. Are these the venues of failed Olympic bids? Let us see if

we can sort it out, using a little surmise.

When Ted Allan wrote the screenplay he did a splendid job. Good lines, fine interaction between the characters. Ted finished the screenplay and went for a walk, leaving his script on a table by an open window. A breezy day. You said it. They collected all the pages, every last one, but nobody quite got around to putting them in the right order. The director, as directors will, saw nothing wrong, recognised no demerit in leaping about the globe and the calendar.

Nor did he think there was anything risky with further fragmentation. So not only does the piece have narration, but there are also linking scenes in which principal players are interviewed about their recollection of events. This does for dramatic pace and rhythm what a whistle-happy referee does for a football match. What a shame, for *Hero of the*

People — the second part is transmitted tonight — has a cracking cast, lush scenery and tells an absorbing story. Donald Sutherland is Dr Norman Bethune, a hard-drinking anti-fascist who travels to China to tend to the medicinal needs of Mao's 8th Route Army during 1938-39, when the nationalists and the communists had agreed an uneasy truce in order to fight the Japanese.

Helen Mirren plays Frances, Bethune's wife, and Mirren is such a wonderful, subtle actress that to criticise anything she is in causes me pain. I would watch her reading the Yellow Pages — but I hazard a guess that, allowed her own remit, she would be unlikely to start at the letter M, followed by A, X and F.

There were moments when I wished she would turn into Jane Tennison to explain where in the world I had fetched up.

Another problem with a drama

that would test the attention span of a sniper is that small, irrelevant matters start to distract one's concentration. What, for example, had he done to Sutherland's head? He was given a bald pate that may have been made of fibreglass, but surely should not have looked as if it was? And of course the chronology malarkey meant that in one scene Sutherland had more hair than in the

previous one, as if he had attended a hair clinic between takes.

Or a health farm. After *Hero of the People* it was a relief to encounter *Cutting Edge* (Channel 4), which is saying something given the subtitle: The Health Farm. Please God, not another documentary about a health farm. This one was Henlow Grange, where we met a lot of people who would be easily mocked but for the fact that self-improvement, if only of the outward variety, is not an unworthy ambition.

I rather liked the man whose job had something to do with roofs. He had gone to Henlow Grange having become too fat to get through the trap door into the attic. I felt for Lisa, aged 18, a pretty girl whose siblings called her a "fat cow" and whose mother saved up for ages to pay for two weeks at Henlow, where Lisa had five pounds in weight (in money, you can lose from £100 to £500 a day).

And there was Janet, who had been through a messy divorce and needed to recover from that as well as spending some time away from her two sons, Normal boys, you understand: there was one air pair the boys had tied up in the garden and used her bottom as a dashboard. Imagine anyone wanting a break from them.

The mysterious part was that in the course of filming, Henlow Grange managed to get through three restaurant managers.

The second one arrived and announced that he had switched to a buffet system, adding what I presume proved to be his own death warrant: he was worried what the bosses would think about some guests going up for food "six or seven times" at the same meal. He soon found out.

Let you need a cure for insomnia and think that a health farm

may provide it. I suggest you save the money and start watching *For The Love Of...* (Channel 4) instead. This is a new late-night series that on last night's evidence will become a temple of nerdery, a haven for anoraks.

The idea is for people to talk about their obsessions. The first obsession was "tall structures" but had nothing to do with Jerry Hall or Mount Everest. These are aerial freaks: some professionals, some amateurs. The chief amateur last night was David Neal, aged 21, who goes around the country photographing radio masts, television masts and so on.

Boring? You could say that, if you were into understatement. Some reckon that Michael Grade is leaving a legacy of late-night smut on Channel 4, but a programme about tall structures without a Freudian psychoanalyst in sight?

Michael must be demob happy.

REVIEW



Peter Barnard

CHOICE

- 6.00am Business Breakfast** (28147)
7.00am BBC Breakfast News (7) (2305)
9.00am Breakfast News Extra (7) (866215)
9.20am Style Challenge (138654)
9.45am Kilroy (8663418)
10.30am Can't Cook, Won't Cook (86503)
11.00am News (1) and weather (822321)
11.05am The Really Useful Show (3206470)
11.35am Change That (5124499)
12.00am News (1) and weather (822147)
12.05pm The Alphabet Game (5827215)
12.30pm Going for a Song (710160)
12.55am The Weather Show (3422526)
1.00am News (1) and weather (822147)
1.30am Regional News (8615970)
1.40am Neighbours (7) (20711470)
2.05am Snowy River: The McGregor Saga (809650)
2.50pm Put It to the Test (298792)
3.15am Wear It Well (2264418)
3.30am Playdays (1) (150780) 3.50 *Casey's* (2645321) 3.55 *Hubbub* (7324825) 4.10 *Prince of Atlantis* (7) (8624234) 4.35 *The Mask* (7) (8125128) 5.00 *Newsround* (7) (7022296) 5.10 *Grange Hill* (7) (1365470)
5.35am Neighbours (7) (20711470)
6.00am News (1) and weather (822147)
6.30am Newsround South East (505)
7.00am Holiday: A murder mystery weekend at Ripley Castle, North Yorkshire; some unusual wildlife in Western Australia; signs and sounds of Tuscany. Fusinga on the Costa del Sol and a three-day donkey trek around Co Kerry (7) (816)
7.30am EastEnders (7) (20711470) Finally faces up to his responsibilities (7) (822147)
8.00am Children's Hospital: The staff battle against time to save three-year-old Sean whose asthma leaves him struggling to breathe and slipping into unconsciousness (7) (2586)
8.30am The Detectives (7) (20711470) and Louise's dreams of a relaxing fortnight on a police launch are shattered by a Second World War sea mine. Last in series (7) (4321)
9.00am News and weather (822147)
9.30am One Foot in the Grave (7) (20711470) Victor lands in a pickle thanks to a conjuring trick (7) (20711470) **9.55am WALL-E: 9.50am Wall-E, in: Wall-E** (7) (20711470) **10.00am One Foot in the Grave** (7) (20711470) Victor lands in a pickle thanks to a conjuring trick (7) (20711470) **10.15am Inside Story** (7) (20711470) Next of Kin 1.05am-2.35am *FILM: The Image*
10.00am Inside Story: Love on the Needle (7) (20711470) James Hall, a heroin addict of more than 20 years (7) (20711470)
10.55am FILM: Need of Kin (7) (20711470) with Patrick Swayze, Bill Paxton and Liam Neeson. Tough cop Swayze is placed in a moral dilemma when his younger brother is killed by a mobster. Directed by John Irvin (7) (11957316)
12.35pm FILM: The Image (7) (20711470) with Albert Finney, John Mahoney and Kathy Baker. A television news anchorman, chased ratings at all costs. Directed by Peter Werner (7) (7323074)
2.05pm 12.00 Weather (5210887)

- 6.00am Open University: The Shrine at Loreto** (522673) 6.25 *Frederick the Great and Sans Souci* (541708) 6.50 *History* (5501654) 7.15 *News* (7) (868760) 7.30 *Secret Squirrel and Co* 7.55 *50/50* Peter 8.20 *John and Friends* 8.35 *The R2D2* (200311) 9.00 *Standard Grade Modern Studies* (866857) 9.20 *The History Collection* (1362626) 9.45 *Watch* (344215) 10.00 *Playdays* (85857) 10.30 *Come Outside* (546070) 10.45 *Teaching Today* (715050) 11.15 *Le Club* 11.30 *Shakespeare: The Animated Tales* 12.00 *See Hear!* (7) 12.30pm *Working Lunch* (7741) 1.00 *Teaching Today* 1.30 *Showcase* (2614321) 1.40 *Hotch Potch* House 2.00 *John and Friends* 2.10 *Everyone's Got One* 3.00 *News* (7) and weather 3.05 *Westminster with Nick Ross* (2422050) 3.55 *News* (7)
4.00am Today's Day (418) 4.30 *Ready, Steady, Go!* (302) 5.00 *Esther* (4944) 5.30 *True Romance* (67122) 5.40 *A Week to Remember* (b/w) (59895) 6.00 *The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air* (7) (81418)
6.25am Heartbreak High Charlie lands in trouble with Katherine when he forgets their anniversary (7) (822654)
7.10am The O Zone (7) (22478)
7.25am Delle's Red Nose Collection A three-course omelette soufflé (7) (87025)
7.30am The Numbers Game Demonstrates what guided missiles, robots and a notorious race trial have in common (407)
8.00am Front Interior designer Anne McKevitt transforms three very different bedrooms (7) (1) (5986)
8.30am Food and Drink Michael Bony prepares a pear and almond tart, Jilly Gordon and Jo Clarke taste wine in Portugal (7) (2068)
9.00am Hero of the People: The Crucible of War Conclusion of the two-part drama charting the life of surgeon Dr Norman Bethune — in Spain and China. In 1936 during the Spanish Civil War, Dr Bethune used innovative medical techniques, which enabled him to perform his first blood transfusions in combat (294)
10.25am Video Nation Shorts (86469)
10.30am Newsnight with Peter Snow (7) (176383)

- Children's Hospital** (BBC1, 8.00pm)
 The triumphant music that wells up over the opening credits may help to explain the appeal of a show that regularly pulls in nine million viewers. Although it deals with sick kids, *Children's Hospital* keeps distress to a minimum. The tone is reassuring. The pain and suffering of the young patients is minimised, but there are experts on hand to deal with it. The level of professionalism is high, the nurses are wonderful and the children mostly leave in better shape than when they came in. The focus tonight is on asthma. Akeel, the Liverpool-based boy featured in the series, deals with 3,000 asthmatic children a year. We meet a couple of them, a chatty five-year-old called Danielle, and little Sean, who is seriously ill and not responding to treatment. Also admitted is a lad with severe head injuries.
- Inside Story: Love on the Needle** (BBC1, 10.00pm)
 James Hall has been addicted to hard drugs since he was 15. He is now 38 and has decided that enough is enough. As well as not getting any younger, he has a liver problem. And Natalie, his wife, would like to start a family, something she has not dared to contemplate while he was hooked on heroin. So, after one last binge, he checks into a detox clinic. James Cohen's film tells two stories. One is about James's attempt to kick the habit of 25 years, as he walks out of the first clinic and decides to spend more than £2,000, money he had saved as a deposit on a house, on a second. The other strand is Natalie's unshakeable love for a man who has so often let her down. She, as much as anyone, deserves to see him succeed. But the detox, shown in all its harrowing detail, is no guarantee of a cure.
- Network First: Breaking the Mirror — The Murdoch Effect** (ITV, 10.40pm)
 John Pilger presents a typically forthright denunciation of the state of the tabloid press, with particular reference to the *Daily Mirror* and *The Sun*. As an old *Mirror* hand he laments what he sees as the decline of a once great people's paper which campaigned on the important issues of the day and made the complexities of politics and world affairs accessible to a mass audience. He blames *The Sun* and its proprietor, Rupert Murdoch, for dragging down the standards of popular journalism and forcing the *Mirror* to do likewise in order to compete. It is not an original claim, but Pilger's analysis in a couple of sentences, though Rigg has surely been asked the question many times before. In any case she has a convincing answer. If Rigg is a great actress, rather than a very good one, it may be because of more taxing roles, such as *India*, *Madness* and *Madness in Wales*. *Virginia Woolf* suggests that she is at the peak of her career. No, says Rigg, admitting to 58, just lucky to be getting good work. Peter Wyndham

- 6.00am GMTV** (1202383)
9.25am Win, Lose or Draw (1306675)
9.55am Regional News (7) (2305)
10.00am The Time, the Place (72363)
10.30am This Morning (7) (3362429)
12.20pm Regional News (7) (2305)
12.30am News (1) and weather (7103415)
12.54am MTV CrimeStoppers (3424232) 1.25 *Home and Away* (1533475) 1.50 *Afternoon Live* (2072532) 2.30 *Versus* (7) (3062502) 2.50 *Afternoon Live* (5632544)
3.20am News (1) (1903809)
3.25am Regional News (7) (2305)
3.30am Potamus Park (7349224) 3.40 *Wizards* (7) (8030256) 3.50 *Gogglewatch: Gags of Goggles* (7) (8089708) 4.00 *Outback Diary* 4.15 *Gogglewatch: Gags of Goggles* (7) (8089708) 4.30 *Sharp Practice* (611125) 4.45 *Gogglewatch: Gags of Goggles* (7) (8089708)
5.10am Getaways (7) (7682673)
5.40am News (1) and weather (71037)
6.00am Home and Away (7) (1533475)
6.25am HTV Weather (7349225)
6.30am HTV News (7) (673)
7.00am Emmerdale (7) (1234)
7.30am The Trouble with Kids Following a group of parents from Bristol who are having problems controlling their children. Tonight, the parent's discover two techniques that bring remarkable results in maintaining discipline (857)
8.00am The Bill: Breaking Up Rawlin uncovers a bitter family feud when a woman claims her former husband's mistress is trying to kill her. With Libby Davidson (7) (7654)
8.30am Pet Power Antrea Turner meets the cave rescue dog which saved a man trapped 200ft underground (7) (6789)
9.00am Peak Practice: Lost Feelings David helps an old friend, now a paraplegic, and his wife to conceive (7) (5383)
10.00am News (1) and weather (45654)
10.30am Regional News (7) (567741)

- As HTV West except**
12.55pm-1.25am A Country Practice (7111437)
5.10-5.40am Shortland Street (7682673)
6.25-7.00am Central News (113031)
7.30-8.00am Heart of the Country (857)
11.40am Central Sports Special (500586)
12.40am Collins and Maconie (5172528)
1.15am FILM: Murder in Paradise (1989) (31035)
3.00am In Focus (3279528)
3.40am Football Extra (1238884)
4.25am Central Jobfinder '97 (2072242)
5.20am Asian Eye (2570567)

- WESTCOUNTRY**
As HTV West except
12.55-1.25am Wish You Were Here? (7111437)
5.10-5.40am Home and Away (7682673)
6.00-7.00am Westcountry Live (8586)
7.30-8.00am Jack Pizzey's Coastline (857)

- 6.00am Sesame Street** (11857) 7.00 *The Big Breakfast* (16215) 8.00 *Bewitched* (7) (55031) 9.30 *Hangin' with Mr Cooper* (7) (2034789) 9.55 *The Crystal Maze* (7) (164215) 10.55 *Back to the Future* (7) (4222586) 11.20 *The Legend of White Fang* (7) (2212741) 11.45 *Rocky's Modern Life* (1589215) 12.00 *House to House* (75856) 12.30pm *Here's One I Made Earlier* (32627) (19302) 1.30 *Butler* (7) (1247079)
1.50am FILM: Carlton Brown of the PO (1959) with Terry-Thomas, Peter Sellers and Ian Bannen. Chances against when a bungling policeman is dispatched to raise Britain's profile on a remote island. Directed by Roy Boulton and Jeffrey Dell (7) (18634234)
3.30am Collectors' Lot (7) (609) 4.00 *Fifteen-to-One* (7) (586) 4.30 *Countdown* (7) (470) 5.00 *Rocky Lake* (7) (9012) 5.30 *Pet Rescue* (7) (550)
6.00am Friends *Chandler starts smoking again* (7) (7) (845586)
6.25am Ant and Dec Unzipped New, temporary comedy, entertainment and music series. Tonight's guests include Danni Minogue, Sean Maguire and comedians Lee and Herring (854405)
6.55am Fresh Pot (700505)
7.00am Channel 4 News (7) (349789)
7.55am The People's Agenda (643031)
8.00am Wings (7) (68) The effects of gradual reforestation on the bird population; Rob Fuller, of the British Ornithological Society, warns of the danger of returning to the wilderness (7) (5286)
8.30am Brookside Things go wrong for Mick and Elaine (7) (7031)



Superior comic, Terry-Thomas (8pm)

- For more comprehensive listings of satellite and cable channels, see the Directory, published on Saturday**
- SKY 1**
6.00am Morning Glory (97825) 8.00 *Joe and Liza* (8418) 10.00 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147) 11.00 *News* (7) (2305) 11.30 *The Oprah Winfrey Show* (7) (20711470) 12.00 *News* (7) (2305) 12.30 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147) 1.00 *News* (7) (2305) 1.30 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147) 2.00 *News* (7) (2305) 2.30 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147) 3.00 *News* (7) (2305) 3.30 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147) 4.00 *News* (7) (2305) 4.30 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147) 5.00 *News* (7) (2305) 5.30 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147) 6.00 *News* (7) (2305) 6.30 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147) 7.00 *News* (7) (2305) 7.30 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147) 8.00 *News* (7) (2305) 8.30 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147) 9.00 *News* (7) (2305) 9.30 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147) 10.00 *News* (7) (2305) 10.30 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147) 11.00 *News* (7) (2305) 11.30 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147) 12.00 *News* (7) (2305) 12.30 *Ant and Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway* (7) (822147)

- SKY MOVIES GOLD**
6.00pm Road to Rio (1947) (206854) 8.00 *The Karate Kid Part II* (7) (1949) (206854) 10.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854) 12.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854) 2.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854) 4.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854) 6.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854) 8.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854) 10.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854) 12.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854) 2.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854) 4.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854) 6.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854) 8.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854) 10.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854) 12.00 *Mad Max: Beyond Thunderdome* (7) (1949) (206854)

- FOX KIDS NETWORK**
6.00am Three Little Pigs (7) (868760) 6.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 7.00 *Savannah* (868427) 7.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 8.00 *Savannah* (868427) 8.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 9.00 *Savannah* (868427) 9.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 10.00 *Savannah* (868427) 10.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 11.00 *Savannah* (868427) 11.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 12.00 *Savannah* (868427) 12.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 1.00 *Savannah* (868427) 1.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 2.00 *Savannah* (868427) 2.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 3.00 *Savannah* (868427) 3.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 4.00 *Savannah* (868427) 4.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 5.00 *Savannah* (868427) 5.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 6.00 *Savannah* (868427) 6.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 7.00 *Savannah* (868427) 7.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 8.00 *Savannah* (868427) 8.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 9.00 *Savannah* (868427) 9.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 10.00 *Savannah* (868427) 10.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 11.00 *Savannah* (868427) 11.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 12.00 *Savannah* (868427) 12.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 1.00 *Savannah* (868427) 1.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 2.00 *Savannah* (868427) 2.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 3.00 *Savannah* (868427) 3.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 4.00 *Savannah* (868427) 4.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 5.00 *Savannah* (868427) 5.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 6.00 *Savannah* (868427) 6.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 7.00 *Savannah* (868427) 7.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 8.00 *Savannah* (868427) 8.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 9.00 *Savannah* (868427) 9.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 10.00 *Savannah* (868427) 10.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 11.00 *Savannah* (868427) 11.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 12.00 *Savannah* (868427) 12.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 1.00 *Savannah* (868427) 1.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 2.00 *Savannah* (868427) 2.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 3.00 *Savannah* (868427) 3.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 4.00 *Savannah* (868427) 4.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 5.00 *Savannah* (868427) 5.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 6.00 *Savannah* (868427) 6.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 7.00 *Savannah* (868427) 7.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 8.00 *Savannah* (868427) 8.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 9.00 *Savannah* (868427) 9.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 10.00 *Savannah* (868427) 10.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 11.00 *Savannah* (868427) 11.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 12.00 *Savannah* (868427) 12.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 1.00 *Savannah* (868427) 1.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 2.00 *Savannah* (868427) 2.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 3.00 *Savannah* (868427) 3.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 4.00 *Savannah* (868427) 4.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 5.00 *Savannah* (868427) 5.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 6.00 *Savannah* (868427) 6.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 7.00 *Savannah* (868427) 7.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 8.00 *Savannah* (868427) 8.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 9.00 *Savannah* (868427) 9.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 10.00 *Savannah* (868427) 10.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 11.00 *Savannah* (868427) 11.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 12.00 *Savannah* (868427) 12.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 1.00 *Savannah* (868427) 1.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 2.00 *Savannah* (868427) 2.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 3.00 *Savannah* (868427) 3.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 4.00 *Savannah* (868427) 4.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 5.00 *Savannah* (868427) 5.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 6.00 *Savannah* (868427) 6.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 7.00 *Savannah* (868427) 7.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 8.00 *Savannah* (868427) 8.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 9.00 *Savannah* (868427) 9.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 10.00 *Savannah* (868427) 10.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 11.00 *Savannah* (868427) 11.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 12.00 *Savannah* (868427) 12.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 1.00 *Savannah* (868427) 1.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 2.00 *Savannah* (868427) 2.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 3.00 *Savannah* (868427) 3.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 4.00 *Savannah* (868427) 4.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 5.00 *Savannah* (868427) 5.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 6.00 *Savannah* (868427) 6.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 7.00 *Savannah* (868427) 7.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 8.00 *Savannah* (868427) 8.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 9.00 *Savannah* (868427) 9.30 *Inspector Gadget* (868427) 10.00 *Savannah* (868427) 10.30 *Inspector Gadget*

